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HOWLING WOLF AND HIS TRICK PONY



LIZZIE W. CHAMPNEY



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THE BEGINNING OF A NEW LIFE.

HOWLING WOLF AND HIS TRICK-PONY

BY
MRS LIZZIE W CHAMPNEY

Author of
The Bubbling Teapot
In the Sky Garden
and others

MANY ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO MY SON,

ED. FRERE CHAMPNEY,

AN AMIABLE YOUNG SAVAGE, WHOSE LOVE FOR HIS PONY EQUALS THAT
OF HOWLING WOLF, THIS STORY, WHICH WOULD NEVER
HAVE BEEN WRITTEN WITHOUT HIS ASSIST-
ANCE, IS AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED.

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HOWLING WOLF AND HIS TRICK-PONY.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRICK-PONY.

WHOOP! for the Captain!" "Go it, West Point!" "Hooray! they're off again!" "The Captain's crazy! he'll break the mare's legs. Jehu! he's jumped from the band-stand."

"He'll kill himself," said the surgeon.

"No, he won't," replied the Quartermaster; "no horse ever failed the Captain. The mare couldn't do it with any other rider, but put the Captain in the saddle and he could lift her over the Black Cañon. He can get the last inch out of a horse that it's capable of. There's a new spirit in the beast the minute he's astride of it."

The garrison had turned out to a man to witness the race, and the few ladies of the frontier Post were grouped on the veranda of the Colonel's house which overlooked the parade-ground. Only a trifle was required to awaken interest in the uneventful life of the Post, and when the news was handed from man to man that Captain Hodge had challenged Lieutenant Archer to a trial of horsemanship the entire community were enthusiastic. Captain Hodge was the best rider in the regiment ; his feats were known for miles around, while the Lieutenant, fresh from West Point, was an unknown quantity. There were rumors, however, that the West Point Riding Academy had never graduated a more daring pupil, and a fine display of horsemanship on both sides was expected.

Among the lookers-on who framed the parade-ground was a little group of three Indians, who stood holding their ponies and regarding the preparations with keen interest. The youngest was a boy of twelve, whose clothing consisted of a strip of cotton-cloth about his loins, a pair of buck-

skin leggings elaborately embroidered and fringed, and moccasins to match. A necklace of blue beads and moose-teeth decorated his chest, which was bare and tattooed; his hair was long, and had the glossy blue tints of the plumage of a crow. His pony's lariat was wound about one arm; the other was twined about the pony's neck. The boy seemed more sensitive than Indians generally, for when stared at instead of answering the look with one of scornful indifference he hid his face shyly in his pony's wavy mane.

Captain Hodge and Lieutenant Archer rode up from the stables in company. Both noticed the Indians, and the Lieutenant inquired how they came there.

"They've been hanging round the sutler's, changing sheep-skins for whiskey," was the reply.

"Sheep-skins! do the Utes keep sheep?"

"Certainly; our sutler buys them for a mere nothing. It's to his interest to trade with them, but if I had my way I'd shoot every Indian off his Reservation."

"Why?"

“Oh, one can see you are just from the East. Wait till you’ve been here six months before you talk Injun.” And the Captain reined in his horse before the band-stand and discussed the conditions of the contest with the umpires. It was decided that Captain Hodge was to take the lead as challenger, that Lieutenant Archer should follow, repeating every performance of the Captain’s or acknowledge himself beaten.

The Captain rode a sorrel mare which he had taught to leap, until it was the best hurdle-racer in the command. He set out at once, leaping all the barriers about the parade-ground. The Lieutenant followed, taking them as easily on his gray horse. Captain Hodge rode his mare finally up the steps of the band-stand and then forced her to leap the low barrier with the added descent of three or four feet. Lieutenant Archer settled himself a little more firmly, rode swiftly to the platform, and spurred his horse to the jump. But the animal refused, rearing and plunging, and finally dashing down the steps and caracoling about the parade.

"You have failed," said the judges; "we must award the victory to Captain Hodge."

"I beg your pardon, gentlemen," replied the Lieutenant, "but the failure cannot be imputed to my horsemanship. It was my horse who refused the flying leap which the Captain's took so gracefully. If Captain Hodge will lend me his mare, I will do it at once. I will even agree to take the lead and will give him a few feats quite as difficult of performance as the leap from the band-stand."

"Let him take her," said the Captain grimly.

"But where will you find a mount?" asked one.

The Captain closed one eye mysteriously, and walked over to the little group of Indians. There was some bargaining, and the Captain counted slowly into the older Indian's hand ten Mexican silver dollars. The Indian boy watched this keenly, and when his father at length gave a grunt of satisfaction he handed the Captain his lariat, at the same time burying his face in his pony's mane, with something which sounded like

a sob. The Captain lengthened the Mexican stirrups, tightened the girth and rode back.

"I have my mount," he said coolly.

Some soldiers chatting near the field-pieces raised a cheer. They recognized the animal as a famous trick-pony which had beaten in the races at Durango the previous autumn.

"The Captain's in luck to be able to get hold of that pony just now," one of them said. "Don't you remember how White Wolf ran it against the best horse entered — a Kentucky thoroughbred? The poor little rat looked ready to drop from the work it had already done in bringing its master and his son from the Reservation, but White Wolf took off the saddle, and hoisted that little chap on bareback, and then you should have seen the dust fly! That race is famous all over the West. The boy cut up all sorts of monkey-shines on the running pony. First he would lie alongside holding on with one foot and a hand clutching the mane (as they protect their bodies with their horses when they're circling round you on the war-path). Then he'd dance like a circus rider, and finally

the little ape sat with his knees drawn up to his chin, facing the jockey who rode the thoroughbred, and making faces at him as he came in about a length ahead. The Indians call it the Enchanted Pony. They made a good thing that day, for they had betted heavily, and we were all about as surprised as we could be."

"Can it jump as well as run?" asked one.

"Like a Jack-rabbit," replied the first speaker. "But hush, they're off. That young West Point fellow will break his neck next he knows."

Indeed this conclusion seemed not unlikely, for mounted on the Captain's mare, Lieutenant Archer circled about the field in the most reckless manner possible. Off from the band-stand, as easily as before, over three Gatling guns one after another in quick succession, past the Infantry quarters, and over a pile of lumber where the carpenters were at work building new barracks; and always and everywhere the Captain followed on the Indian pony, leaping, running neck to neck, repeating every manœuvre with exactness. The crowd of excited spectators ran after them,

cheering each fresh exploit, and taking sides noisily in favor of the Captain or the Lieutenant; all talking and running themselves breathless with the exception of the Indians, who ran silently, and apparently without exertion at the head of the crowd, the long-haired boy coming up to pat the pony at every pause in the feats.

Suddenly the entire chattering throng were still. Had the West Point man taken leave of his senses, that he should attempt such a daring, such an impossible, feat as this? There stood the new barracks, a long half-finished building; the walls were up and the beams ready for the flooring which was not yet laid. Waving his hand to Captain Hodge to follow, the Lieutenant spurred the mare into this building. Beam after beam she cleared as lightly as a cat, coming down carefully in the narrow space between them.

"He'll break the mare's legs," exclaimed one.

"I hope he'll break his precious neck," growled the Captain from between his set teeth. But he did neither. Man and beast came out safely at the end of the long building and the Lieutenant

threw up his cap and dared the Captain to follow.

The White Wolf stole quickly to the Captain's side, laid a hand on his bridle and shook his head; but the Captain thrust him aside and reined the pony to its work, lifting it, as it would seem, by the sheer force of his iron grip over several of the beams. But the pony was nervous and weary with racing so long under so heavy a man as the Captain. Perhaps the long lines of straight beams on which the setting sun quivered dazzled the eyes of both horse and rider. At all events the pony shied at some object between the beams, was sharply twitched by the Captain, stumbled, and fell, laming its shoulder. The Captain was on the ground in an instant attempting to lead the pony out; but that was impossible until the carpenters had removed some of the beams.

The pony and the Captain came in each for his share of condolence, but no one thought of the Indians until White Wolf touched the Captain on the shoulder. "You have spoiled my pony," he said, and his look was black and threatening.

“*Your* pony!” replied the Captain scornfully. “I bought him of you.”

The Indian threw the dollars on the ground.

“*Borrow* him this one time,” he said. “You say *borrow*. You no say buy.”

The umpires now interfered. “See here, Hodge, ten dollars is no price for that pony. It was worth a hundred at the very least.”

“We ought to make it good to the owner,” said the Lieutenant. “It was partly my fault and I’ll share the damage.” He opened his pocket-book and whistled. “I didn’t know I was so nearly broke. Here, you Indian, come up on next pay-day and I’ll give you fifty dollars. I’ll see to the pony too. Perhaps we can cure her.”

But the Captain sullenly insisted that he had fairly bought the pony for ten dollars, and whatever it might have been worth before the accident that was a good price for it now, and with this White Wolf was obliged to be content. He was turning from the place when he noticed his little son with his arms about the head of the disabled pony, weeping passionately.



WHITE WOLF THREW THE DOLLARS ON THE GROUND,



This sight appeared to anger White Wolf more than his previous misfortune. "Ah!" he cried in the Ute language, "you deserve your pappoose-name of 'Howling Wolf.' Never will you gain the name of a warrior if you cry like a squaw."

The boy stiffened instantly. The tears seemed to dry from his cheeks as from hot copper. He mounted silently behind his father, and nothing more was said by either of them until they reached a hill from which the last view of the fort was to be obtained. Then White Wolf drew rein and looked long and loweringly at the white buildings.

"He of the gray horse was not bad," said Howling Wolf.

"Words are cheap. Will he give me fifty dollars if I go to him when he bade me? I have known white men too long to believe it."

"Do you think they will cure the pony?"

"Perhaps. It did not look like a bad sprain."

"Then why did you not bring it with us?"

"Because it could not travel in that condition. We will have whoever goes to the fort tell us of

its condition, and if it is cured our most cunning man shall steal it back again."

"Father," said Howling Wolf suddenly, "I hate my pappoose-name. It is worse than that of any of the other boys. How old were you when you gained the name of a brave?"

"I gained mine in my youth," replied the father, "for five white scalps."

Howling Wolf sat a little straighter and dug his heels into the ribs of the pony while an unpleasant smile took the place of his look of despair. "If I kill him—the Captain—and get back the pony, shall I have my new name?"

The father's heart beat high with pride. A white father who felt as White Wolf did at that moment would have hugged his boy, but the Indian gave no sign of his pleasure. "You are not old enough," he said. "You must not kill the Captain, we are at peace now and it would bring much trouble upon us. Leave him to me, and when there is war again I will remember him. You shall have his scalp on the war-shirt your mother is making for you. As for the pony they

will keep it in the corral — a bad place well guarded at night. I forbid you to try to steal it.”

Still the exultant savage look did not leave Howling Wolf's eyes. “I will try,” he said to himself; “when the pony is well, I will try!”

CHAPTER II.

THE LOST MEDICINE.

WHITE WOLF carried his son back to the encampment of the tribe, a pretty grove of cottonwood on the brawling Los Pinos River. Long and loud was the howl of indignation and sorrow when it was known that the Enchanted Pony was left maimed and a captive at the Post. The pony was the pride of the tribe. Not an Indian but had thrilled with triumph at its successes. Many had made themselves rich with bets on its prowess in the race-course, and all took this event as a general calamity. There was a long smoke and pow-wow about the matter in the evening. To this Howling Wolf was not admitted, but he skulked outside the council tent to listen, and he heard Snake-in-the-Grass, the slyest, stealthiest warrior in the tribe, as well as the greatest

boaster, offer to steal back the pony, and he heard, too, the old chief Ignacio accept the offer forbidding any one else to attempt the exploit and stipulating only that he should wait for several weeks until the pony should recover from the sprain.

Howling Wolf in the darkness shed burning tears of envy. For days thereafter he sulked and moped, sitting in the tepee, or wigwam, and hugging his knees while his great eyes burned like coals under his tangled locks, instead of racing through the woods and over the prairies herding his father's ponies, which had been both his work and his pastime. His father understood his feelings and simply said, "His heart is great; Grasshopper Bow-Legs may herd the ponies."

So Howling Wolf's younger brother took his place—much to the contentment of the ponies, for no one cut up such pranks and antics as Howling Wolf; no one else kept them in such constant action—lying on their backs, turning somersaults, springing from one to another, lassoing, throwing them, urging them to buck, rear, roll, prance and

kick and delighting his soul altogether in their pranks.

The boy's mother, to cheer him, took out the war-shirt she was making for him and embroidered it in silence, using her brightest beads and quills. But her son paid no attention to her, and refused to taste the tempting morsels which she placed before him. Then the good woman became alarmed; and sure that there was "an evil spirit in his stomach" she sent for his grandmother, who, next to the Medicine-Man, was the most knowing person in the treatment of sick and bewitched people.

The best story-teller too in the tribe was this same grandmother, old Mother Two Tongues, so called because she could out-talk any two squaws in Colorado. Howling Wolf could not remember the time when he did not love to lie in her tepee and listen to hunting tales of the great grizzly bears of the northern mountains, the catamounts and buffalo, the elk and the gray wolves which used to roam as freely as the Indian over the entire State,

So now when her daughter asked her to come and weave a spell over Howling Wolf this wise old woman sat down by the fire and apparently not noticing him began to tell stories to the other children, who swarmed into the tepee as soon as they heard of her coming. Even little Afraid-of-his-Shadow crouched behind a buffalo's head sometimes used in the dances, and sat shivering in advance, with the terror which he knew he would feel before Grandmother Two Tongues had finished. Big-Toe and Honey-tooth, the two girls, crept close to the old woman, and Grass-hopper Bow-Legs, having been sent for by climbing Wild-Cat, came puffing into the wigwam before the first story had hardly begun.

"I am going to tell you a legend of the Garden of the Gods," said Grandmother Two Tongues, "a tale of the great Stone Gods which I have myself seen when the Utes wandered at will where they would. Every year when I was a child we journeyed over the high mountains to a wonderful healing-spring in a sacred valley. There we carried our sick, and there we met the Shoshones in

peaceful dances and councils, and there we wandered among the great red sandstone images which Manitou himself carved long ages ago, and we were powerful and happy. I remember two of those Stone Gods very distinctly — *The Seal and the Bear* — and it is their legend which I am going to tell you to-day.

“Ages ago Manitou made this country, say the Wise Men, and he gave it to the great Grizzly Bear, the noblest of created beings, for man had not yet been made. And he said to the Bear, ‘Be joyful and courageous, and range through all this land, for it is yours, and whatever creature opposes you fight with him and overthrow him, for the mastery shall be given you, and whether it be bird, or beast, or demon, or spirit, you shall withstand him, until the coming of the Indian. Then it will be of no use for you to fight, for it is ordained that the Indian shall overcome you.’

“And the Bear heard and believed and ranged through the land and was master of it. Now the Bad God desired this country for his children the White Men, but he knew that he could not obtain

it by strength or by right, for the first was given to the Bear and the second to Manitou. So he had recourse to a trick, and he took upon himself the form of a Seal, and stirred up a great commotion in the waters, so that the waves swept over the land and came rolling toward the west in great curling breakers, on the top of which he rode, and behind in ships followed his children, the White Men.

“Now the Bear sat upon a pinnacle of the rock watching, and when he saw the waves rolling nearer he was astonished, but unafraid, for he trusted in Manitou. Presently the Seal reached the foot of the rock on which the Bear sat, and he climbed upon it, and when the Bear saw his black head appear at the other end of the rock, and marked his malicious eyes and cruel, snarling mouth, he prepared himself to do battle, for he was still unafraid.

“Then the Seal said, ‘It will not avail thee to fight for I shall prevail,’ for so it is appointed.”

“Then the Bear thought, ‘This surely is the Indian, and my time is come,’ and he said, ‘There is

but one appointed to whom I must yield, and that is the Indian.'

"And the Seal said, 'I am the Indian.'

"Then the Bear's heart froze within him and he became stone. But the Bad God did not attain all that he wished, for Manitou changed him also by his great power into stone, and the curling waves which had threatened to overflow the land were frozen into ranges of mountains which surround the Garden of the Gods to this day. The White Men, too, who had approached so near were driven back, and not until years afterward did they succeed (after the Medicine of the Utes had been lost) by the wiles of their father in wresting the land from the Bear and the Indian."

"And have you seen the stone Bear and Seal, Grandmother?" asked the children.

"I have seen them," replied Grandmother Two Tongues, "and there they remain to this day."

Howling Wolf lifted his head from his knees. "Tell me how the Utes lost their Medicine," he said; but Grandmother Two Tongues had fallen

into a waking dream and would say nothing more that day.

The reservation of the Southern Utes where Howling Wolf lived is a narrow strip of country running along the southern boundary of Colorado. Here Howling Wolf's tribe, about one thousand in number, are penned by the Government. Formerly the Utes ranged over the entire State of Colorado and through the territories adjoining; but civilization has pressed them in on every side, and now the war-like tribe are confined to a reservation one hundred and twenty miles long but only fifteen wide. The game has entirely disappeared from this strip, and though it contains some good farming land the older Indians have a lofty disdain of labor, which in their opinion is only fit for women, and very few of them have planted crops. Howling Wolf's mother was very industrious; he had seen her put up their tepee in five minutes and take it down in three. She could skin a deer, dress the hide, jerk the meat, chop wood, bring it on her back, do all the rough work of their camp-life beside making and embroidering their cloth-

ing, cooking the meals and caring for a large family of children. Howling Wolf was fond of her in a dumb-animal way, but he never offered to help her; his sisters could do that—it was their place, and if Big-Toe or Honey-Tooth did not do their duty his mother could depend on him to kick them.

There was little inducement for the Utes to labor, for the Government issued rations to them irregularly, which while they are not adequate to their support still keeps up the old delusion that work is not expected of them and that they are to be supported in idleness.

When the rations failed, as they not unfrequently did, White Wolf and the other Indians had only to shoot some of the cattle belonging to white herders which overrun the Indian reservation although contrary to law. The Indians would gladly rent their land for grazing purposes to the great cattle-owners but this Government would not allow them to do, though it made resistance to the illegal pasturing of great herds for nothing on the Utes' land. So now and then it was not to be

wondered at that a starving Indian killed a steer, especially as he was not allowed to overstep the boundaries of his reservation and hunt the wild game in the mountains on pain of being shot down at sight by any white man.

The cow-boys invariably retaliated by shooting a few Indians when they found that their cattle had been stolen, and then the Utes, who knew no other law but their own "life for life," would steal away in the night and take white scalps in revenge, often killing unoffending settlers, women and even children.

This is how it has come about that the citizens of Colorado do not love the Utes, that they say this particular tribe unite all the bad qualities of all the bad Indians, that they are as dirty as the Diggers, as cruel as the Sioux, as stealthy and daring as the Apaches, as treacherous as the Kiowas and lazier than any other tribe. It does not seem to be any excuse for these wretched people that no one appears to take any interest in making them better; the kindest Colorado Indian policy seems to be to move them away as far off to

the West as possible, while the more popular idea is that of extermination.

The Government had built a schoolhouse at the Southern Ute agency and people wondered that the Utes did not become educated faster, not considering the trifling circumstance that the Government had neglected to send a teacher, or any missionaries to teach here. Howling Wolf had often peered into the windows of the unused schoolhouse and wondered why it was there.

It is possible that the Utes reflect something of the uncomplimentary opinions of their white neighbors. Howling Wolf had only heard the White Man spoken of as their natural enemy. To be sure there was some one away toward the rising sun called Washington, the chief of the white men, who was very rich and powerful. It was he who sent them their agent and their supplies, but he was not altogether kind, for he often forgot them for long periods, and the "brass-button men" who were near them in such numbers and whom they had such cause to fear belonged to Chief Washington and worked his will.

It was the opinion of the wisest and oldest men of the tribe to whom Howling Wolf listened with respect that Chief Washington intended to kill them by slow starvation and that it was of no use to resist, for the Utes had lost their "Medicine."



THE UNUSED SCHOOLHOUSE AT THE UTE AGENCY.

Concerning this Medicine there were many legends to which Howling Wolf always listened with a thrill of wild interest and as his grandmother cared more for him than for any of her other descendants it was not hard to tease her into repeating them.

One evening Howling Wolf came into the tepee, his eyes glowing with suppressed excitement. He counted his arrows, and slyly added two war-arrows from his father's quiver to his own collection. No one paid any attention to him with the exception of Grandmother Two Tongues. "What is the matter?" she grunted.

Howling Wolf crept close to her. "I will tell you," he said, "if you will first repeat the legend of The Lost Medicine of the Utes."

"A story, a story!" whooped the other children, and Grandmother Two Tongues' audience was soon grouped about her.

"Many years ago," she began, "our people, the Utes, were both powerful and happy. They roamed over the mountains from the Garden of the Gods to the great Western Sea, and herds of buffalo, of elk and antelope grazed beside their camps. Manitou had given the Utes a sacred object to be their Medicine, or talisman, against misfortune. 'As long as you possess this,' he had said, 'you will continue to be happy and fortunate, and no other tribe can prevail against you in war.

When you lose this Medicine, misfortune will come to you, but whoever finds it will be happy.' Now there is no very clear tradition as to what this Medicine was. Some say that it was a little squat image such as the Pueblos worship. Other of our learned men are of opinion that it was a scroll of magic writing; but, whatever it was, it was very carefully guarded by the chief of our tribe, who slept with it bound to his breast, while it was guarded by day in turn by the most noted braves of the tribe. And the Utes prospered more and more, until the neighboring tribes grew envious, and knowing the reason many attempts were made to buy or steal our precious Medicine.

"One night a war-party of Arapahoes, our deadly enemies, crept silently up to our camp and two of their young men stole into the tepee of the chief, slew him and secured the Medicine. Then they hurried away; but the sound of the hoofs wakened some one in the camp, the alarm was given and the calamity instantly discovered. Then there was mounting in haste, and our braves skimmed away across the shadowy prairie after the fleeing

Arapahoes. And because our horses were better, or, perhaps, only because they were fresher, they gained upon them. Then a part of the Arapahoes turned and fought and the others sped on with the Medicine. But the hearts of our men were big with sorrow, and they slew the party which faced them, and again they gained upon the others who made a last stand seeing that it was impossible to escape. And our warriors slew them every one. But when they came to search the bodies they found not the Medicine. And when an embassy was sent to the chief of the Arapahoes with many gifts he could only tell us that not one of that war-party ever returned and the Medicine was lost. Some thought that finding themselves hard pressed they had buried it as they fled, with some mark to show where it was hidden. So the ground was very carefully hunted over, but no trace of it was ever found.

“Then the miseries came which had been foretold. The game went, and the White Man came, and little by little our lands were taken from us and our tribe reduced to this wretched remnant.

Not without struggle or effort ; sometimes we have risen and struck fiercely at the white men and have beaten them back, but they have come again with overwhelming numbers and have crushed us down, down. Then our last great chief, Ouray, said, ' It is no use fighting against them ; let us join hands and welcome them as friends.' But that was of no use either. They drove his widow Chipeta from the home which he had built in the white men's fashion with peach trees all about it ; a home where he had fed and sheltered the white man, and they sent Chipeta wandering away to build her tepee with her fugitive tribe. It was of no use. Nothing is of any use — our Medicine is lost."

The old woman's head sunk upon her breast and the fire, untended, died down to a few embers.

"Grandmother Two Tongues," said Howling Wolf in a voice husky with emotion, "what would happen if some one should find the Medicine?"

"Nothing would be too good for him," she replied. "Every man in our tribe would impoverish himself to reward him suitably. They would make him their chief, all his wishes would be gratified."

“But what would happen to our tribe?”

The squaw’s eyes flashed. “We would be pow-



CHIEF OURAY AND HIS WIFE CHIPETA.

erful once more. The men would no longer be lazy and drunken. They would all be great warriors and hunters, and the women would be rich

and beautiful and there would be plenty—plenty! No children or old people would die of hunger, and sickness and trouble would flee away.”

“Grandmother Two-Tongues,” said Howling Wolf, “I am going to find our Lost Medicine.”

“Many have said so before you, my boy.”

“But I have an idea, and you must listen,” insisted Howling Wolf. “I believe that one of those Arapahoes got away with the talisman but did not return to his tribe. He took refuge with some other people who still have the Medicine. Now I am going to visit all the tribes about us until I find happy Indians, then I shall know that our Medicine is there and I will stay and watch until I find and steal it and bring it back to you.”

“It is a boy’s reasoning, a boy’s plan,” mused the old woman, “yet not stupid. There is sense in it, but your father will never consent to it.”

“I am going to prove to my father that I am not a pappoose,” the boy continued. “Snake-in-the-Grass came back from the Post to-night. He has made two efforts to get back the Enchanted Pony and has failed; and now Ignacio has given anyone

in the tribe permission to try, but no one dares. I shall do it to-night. Tell no one, but in the morning I shall bring back the Enchanted Pony."

"Go," said Grandmother Two-Tongues, "and Manitou aid you. If you succeed in this undertaking, I shall believe you will succeed also in the desire of your heart — you will bring us back our Lost Medicine." For a moment her claw-like fingers rested upon the head of her favorite grandson. Then White Wolf entered the tepee, and Howling Wolf stole silently out into the darkness.

CHAPTER III.

A RACE FOR LIFE.

WHEN Howling Wolf left his grandmother's tepee he selected one of the swiftest ponies in his father's herd and rode quietly away in the direction of the fort.

About midnight he reached a little copse of pinyon trees, half a mile from the corral in which the Government horses and mules were kept. From this spot to the enclosure there was no cover, and a mounted horseman could have been easily descried on the treeless expanse, even on such a night as this, when the sky was obscured from time to time by flitting clouds.

Howling Wolf concealed his mustang in the copse and cautiously crept along the plain in the direction of the fort. He could see a sentry pacing from the gate of the corral to the opposite

corner of the fort, a distance of about one eighth of a mile, and if the clouds would befriend he thought he could dash for the gate of the corral, and possibly get inside, while the sentry was at the most distant part of his beat. Meantime his quick eye discerned another favoring circumstance. An *arroyo*, or dry gulch, ran in a zigzag direction from the spot where he lay nearly to the gate of the corral. He rolled into it and crept on all-fours to the spot nearest the gate. Here he cautiously raised his head, but ducked it none too quickly, for the sentry was within a few yards of him. Fortunately he had not been noticed, and waiting until his footsteps sounded faintly in the distance the boy again lifted himself from the ditch.

The sentry was still walking away from him and, although it was now not quite so dark as it had been, he ventured to slip up to the gate of the corral. It was fastened by a bolt on the outside, and was further secured by a rope twisted several times around and knotted. It was the work of an instant to slip the bolt; but untying

the rope was a longer operation. It was only half done when he noticed that the sentry was returning, and he dropped instantly upon the ground and crept to the hiding-place afforded by the *arroyo*.

Waiting until sufficient time had elapsed for the soldier to be at the other extremity of his walk Howling Wolf raised his head. To his consternation the man had not moved away. Something had excited his suspicion, and he stood at a little distance from the gate looking intently toward the *arroyo*. He saw Howling Wolf, but did not comprehend that the vague, moving object was an Indian. It was something alive, however, some wild animal he thought, and he brought his gun to his shoulder. The boy dropped into the bottom of the ditch, and uttered an imitation of the cry of the coyote or prairie-wolf. This cry confirmed the sentry's belief, but it was not worth his while to waste a shot and alarm the garrison by firing at such small game. Howling Wolf repeated the yelping bark at intervals and retreated down the *arroyo*. It would not do, he thought, to attempt anything further to-night.

But this was a favorite cry of the boy's, and the Enchanted Pony inside the corral heard and recognized it as the voice of his dearly-loved little master. He whinnied uneasily and trotted up to the gate. It was still tied by the rope, but the pony was as skilful at untying knots as any of the trained animals in the "Equine Paradox," and he worked away at it industriously with his teeth, answering each of the distant howls with an impatient, loving neigh, which said as plainly as horse could speak: "I hear you, little master. I am coming."

The sentry, who had resumed his walk, was astonished as he paced back toward the corral to see the gate open without any apparent agency, and the herd of horses scatter rapidly over the plain. He shouted and ran, other soldiers coming in answer to his cries, but the horses delighting in their liberty had capered to quite a distance and were so full of frolic that it was a long time before they were re-captured.

But not until the next morning, when Captain Hodge came down to the corral, was it discovered

that the Enchanted Pony was gone. He was very angry and perfectly convinced that the Utes had stolen it away, but the sentry, and the other soldiers who had arrived at the first alarm, were positive that no Indians had been around. "If they had," argued the sentry, "why didn't they stampede the whole herd? They could have got off with all as easily as with one."

This question was unanswerable ; but Captain Hodge went over the ground carefully, and his practised eye soon singled out the *arroyo*. He walked along its side with the Lieutenant, closely scanning the appearance of the earth. "Something has been here recently," he said, pointing to some soil which had been freshly disturbed.

"There was a coyote prowling round there in the fore part of the night," said the sentry.

"A coyote who wore beaded leggings," replied the Captain contemptuously, as he lifted a bit of broken string with three beads threaded upon it, from the entangling root on which it had caught. "What do you say, Lieutenant, will you ride with me over to the Ute Reservation?"

"You surely do not intend to provoke hostilities," replied the other.

"Why not?" returned the Captain. "If the Utes dare to resist my taking back that pony there will be trouble, that's all, and they will have the worst of it. The quicker they give us occasion for wiping them out the better, and the entire Indian problem will be settled."

"There will be no trouble," said the Major. "The Utes are on their good behavior now. They know we are only waiting for an excuse to exterminate them. They will make no resistance, and if the Captain demands the pony through their agent they will doubtless give it up."

Meantime there was great excitement in the Indian encampment on the Los Pinos River. At the same hour that the foregoing conversation was taking place, Howling Wolf's young companions were yelling, the squaws running with streaming hair, even the braves had thrown down their pipes and were whooping, and through it all Howling Wolf came riding in on the trick-pony, outwardly calm (though his little heart was bursting with

pride and consequence), up to the chief's lodge. Here he reined in, and sat as straight and motionless as a totem, awaiting the appearance of Ignacio. The barking of the dogs and general human uproar soon brought out the chief. He put aside the flap of buffalo-hide which served as a door to his tepee or wigwam, but when he saw the pony, he raised both arms, whether in wonder or in blessing one could scarcely say, for he uttered but one word, which may be translated by three of ours — "The Enchanted Pony!"

"The Enchanted Pony!" echoed the throng, and they all began talking at once; explaining, arguing, asking questions, shouldering each other to get near enough to lift the animal's hoofs, gently to rub his smoking flanks or examine his shoulder. Howling Wolf meantime maintained his attitude of profound indifference, affecting not to see the little group about him and apparently studying the wanderings of the distant Los Pinos River with the eye of a landscape artist.

It was only when the chief spoke to him that he condescended to awake to consciousness.

"You stole back this pony, when?"

"Last night at midnight."

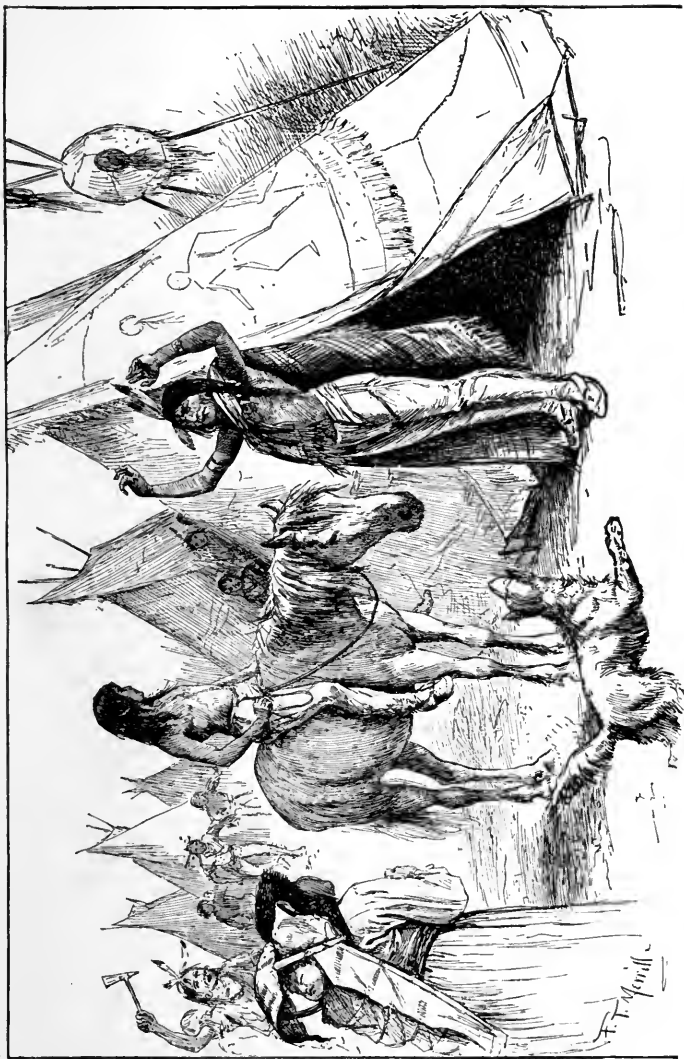
Old Ignacio gave a grunt of satisfaction, while the crowd exclaimed that he must have ridden hard to have reached home so soon. Further encouraged Howling Wolf related the entire story.

"You were a fool not to bring more horses," said Snake-in-the-Grass, who had twice failed in attempts to secure the pony, and was envious.

"He would have been a fool to have thus brought destruction upon his tribe," said the chief. "The soldiers will be here by evening as it is. Neither Howling Wolf nor his pony must be here. Let him ride across the Lonely Mountains to our brothers the Uncompahgres."

Howling Wolf's family hustled him away. "You can rest your pony at the Divide in the San Juan Mountains and push on toward evening."

Old Mother Two Tongues crept up to him and fastened some pieces of jerked beef to his saddle. "All right, grandmother," he whispered, "but I am not going to the Uncompahgres'. I shall go to the Navajoes."



"THE ENCHANTED PONY" CRIED IGNACIO.



She nodded. The Uncompahgres were Utes like themselves ; there was no chance of the Lost Medicine existing among them. But the Navajoes were very different in character and condition ; they were peaceful, industrious and, in comparison with the Utes, rich. It was very possible that they possessed the luck-bringing charm.

In half an hour Howling Wolf was gayly and rapidly journeying away toward the Divide which his father had mentioned. But by and by, instead of striking off toward the north, he followed the Las Animas River on its southern course to the San Juan, which would lead him into Arizona and the Navajo Reservation.

Just as the pony showed signs of fatigue he reached some ancient cliff-dwellings, mere caves in the sides of a hill inhabited ages ago, it might be, by his own ancestors. In one of these a little larger than the others, he stabled his pony, and lay down beside it secure from observation, and happy as a king.

Meantime officers reached the Ute Reservation a few hours after Howling Wolf's departure. The

agent immediately summoned the family of White Wolf and charged them with the theft of the pony, which they all stoutly denied.

"Where is your boy, Howling Wolf?" asked the agent. "You have sent him off to hide somewhere in the mountains until the search is over."

"Howling Wolf," said the father with more truth than he thought, "has gone to the Navajoes."

Old Mother Two Tongues started. "It is not so," she exclaimed; "he left this morning for our cousins, the Uncompahgre Utes who live in Utah."

Such truth and treachery was met by a howl from the entire family. "Howling Wolf has gone to the Navajoes to trade bead-work for blankets. Believe her not, she is crazy, she is a liar, she is an idiot." And her relatives did not scruple to add blows to their wordy abuse — driving her from the Agency building with all precipitation.

"Where do you think he has gone?" asked the Lieutenant of the agent.

"In such a case as this," said the agent, "we can safely presume that the Indians would not speak the truth. The majority declare that he

has gone to the Navajoes, therefore he is probably on his way to the Uncompahgres."

"Um," said the Captain musingly, "that is just the way an Injun would expect us to reason. He would say—'I will try to make them think I am anxious for them to go to the Navajoes and they will be sure to take the other direction.' Therefore I'm of the opinion that he *has* gone to the Navajoes, and that if we ride fast we can overtake him."

The pursuing party accordingly set out in the very direction in which Howling Wolf had gone. The Indians followed them till they mounted the Divide and turned southward. Then the family, with grunts of satisfaction, returned to their Reservation. But one old woman threw up her arms and shrieked, and ran after the cavalry until breath and limbs failed, wildly declaring that her grandson had not gone in that direction, but that White Wolf had deceived them into an ambush, and that she alone was friendly to the whites. The Lieutenant drew rein, half inclined to believe her, but Captain Hodge called to him and he followed.

They had not travelled many miles before they met a mounted cowboy searching for his cattle, who seemed particularly glad of their company. "There are Injuns skulking round," he said. "I saw one pop his head out of one of the old cliff-dwellings yonder, and I didn't stop to shoot but just dusted."

When the Captain explained that they were in search of a single boy the man's courage rose. "Sho!" he exclaimed, "I might have brought him down as easy. But I suspicioned there might be more on 'em — I'll help you catch the little varmint. I shouldn't wonder if it's he that's been stealing my cattle. The Government has been three months behind in sending the Utes their rations, and they do say some on 'em are starving, and when a Ute is hungry he's ugly — they don't seem to have any idea about property-rights. Why, the unprincipled rascals would kill one of my steers as quick as — well, as quick as you or I would shoot an Injun."

Unluckily for Howling Wolf the three came in sight of the cliff-dwellings just as he was leaving

his covert. He heard the quick beat of hoofs in the distance and whistled in his pony's ears as he threw a glance over his shoulder at his pursuers.

The race which was now run was even more exciting and more reckless than that which introduced his pony to us. This time the pony's own will was engaged. He had his beloved little master on his back, and he was an Indian pony through and through and knew that he was fleeing from United States soldiers. But his long journey of the morning and the night before told upon him, and the Captain's thoroughbred pressed him close — was upon him; and now the Captain made a dash at the bridle, but the pony swerved deftly and was off again, with Howling Wolf grinning from under his neck. Captain Hodge did not intend to kill the boy, but he was angry at being served such a trick, and his pistol was out of his holster in an instant, and brought to the steady aim which was so sure to bring down its victim. Just as his finger touched the trigger the Lieutenant came skimming along, with so little or such good heed, that his horse brushed roughly against the thor-

oughbred, and the pistol was discharged into the air. The Captain drew rein and faced the Lieutenant angrily.

"Pardon me," said the Lieutenant, "but we agreed that if we caught them the pony should be yours, but the boy mine."

In avoiding the officers Howling Wolf had glided dangerously near the cowboy, who, only a few yards behind, was now coiling his lariat for a cast.

"About his waist!" shouted the Lieutenant; "don't strangle him!"

Lightly, gracefully, the flying loop descended. Howling Wolf ducked, but too late. The fatal noose had bound his arms to his side and dragged him from his saddle. The pony dashed away a few rods then turned, looked at his little master, and approached doubtfully; but Howling Wolf saw this and raising himself to his elbow gave vent to a yell, only to be equalled in its hideousness by that of a city milkman, and the pony, frightened or recognizing its import, dashed still more swiftly away.

"You are more fortunate than I," said Captain Hodge sulkily. "But we can make the boy whistle in the pony. Give me that lariat and I'll whip the young rascal into submission."

"If you please," said the Lieutenant firmly, "I doubt whether he would yield if you whipped him to death, and I do not care to have the experiment tried."

With the help of the cowboy Howling Wolf was marched back to the old cliff-dwelling where, as evening had overtaken them, it was resolved to camp. A fire was built, a prairie-chicken, which had been shot on the way, was roasted; and a small, cell-like cave was selected from those with which the cliff was honeycombed as a prison for the young Indian. The low entrance was blocked by their saddles, and the Lieutenant lay down in front to keep guard over his prisoner, with more loving thoughts than probably ever before filled the mind of a jailer. The boy's beseeching eyes haunted him. "I will teach him to love me," he thought; "I will see his father and get his permission to keep him. I will make him my com-

panion and be to him a true friend. I will teach him and when he is older and prepared for it I will enter him at West Point. He will make a splendid soldier. How unflinchingly he glared at the Captain when he held the rope's end over his shoulders—he seemed to dare the brute to strike.”

The camp-fire settled into darkness, and a little sob sounded hollowly in the cavern behind him. Howling Wolf's vaunted courage had given way. A great pity filled the Lieutenant's heart. He recalled his own lonely boyhood and striking a light he removed one of the saddles and called Howling Wolf. Had the boy but known it the Lost Medicine was very near him at that instant, but he dashed the baby-tears from his eyes and, standing with folded arms, regarded his captor with the same vindictive glare.

“Are you hungry?” asked the Lieutenant.

The boy did not answer.

“You are lonesome, eh? Well, come out here and sit with me.”

The boy showed that he understood, for he

retreated further into the little cave, his eyes shining like those of a wild cat.

The Lieutenant sighed. "I must wait for it," he murmured, and replacing the saddle, he fell asleep to dream of his foster-child.

Howling Wolf sat with his arms about his knees, staring before him and thinking. Suddenly he realized that he was not in the dark. The embers without were buried in ashes, the light with which the interior of the cavern was illuminated must come from the moon. He looked up, and saw it shining down through a narrow shaft cut through the solid rock to the top of the cliff. The shaft was smoke-blackened, and must have originally served the first inhabitants of the cavern as chimney. There were ashes below it and broken pieces of pottery which sufficiently proved this; but there were convenient notches made to fit moccasoned feet cut in the sides which showed that it had been staircase also, and the ingenuity of his ancestors served Howling Wolf now.

Outside, skirting the camp, was a shadowy form. Now circling nearer, now scampering away, it

flitted about like an uneasy ghost. The Captain's thoroughbred whinnied but the phantom pony did not answer. Its faithful heart was not longing for horse-companionship. It snuffed the air and trotted uneasily about, until from the top of the cliff sounded the mournful cry of the prairie wolf. The pony threw back its head, listened, and then was off like a shot around the end of the cliff.

The Lieutenant awoke at sunrise a little stiff, but his heart was warm if his hands were cold. "Come, Howling Wolf," he cried out cheerily, "let us see if we cannot be better friends this morning." He pulled aside the saddles and stared into the sunlighted interior with speechless surprise — the boy was gone.

CHAPTER IV.

THE HAUNTED CASTLE.

HOWLING WOLF scuttled away on his pony across the plain in the weird moonlight. When morning dawned he was far beyond pursuit. But he did not pause until toward noon, when he reached a cañon or deep crack in the table-land, in the bottom of which a little stream fed from the melted snows of the Dolores Mountains trickled southward to the San Juan. Here he hid and rested his pony until toward evening. Here, too, he ate the last remnant of the jerked beef with which Mother Two Tongues had provided him, and he knew that it behooved him to travel carefully and swiftly in order to reach the Navajoes before the pangs of hunger should become unendurable.

He attempted to ford the San Juan at night-

fall; a dangerous experience, for the rushing water lifted him from his saddle and separated him from his pony, and when he finally reached the southern shore he found that the pony had given up the effort and had returned to the starting-place. Howling Wolf called him. He cantered up and down the opposite bank neighing and dashing into the stream but not daring to cross. So Howling Wolf was obliged to swim back again and follow the river further westward to a better fording-place.

He finally accomplished the crossing and struck off in a southwesterly direction. But when the sun rose he found himself in an unfamiliar country. He saw a great stretch of prairie, with here and there a clump of stunted pinyon-trees, and long dry gulches crossing his course as though on purpose to perplex him.

For two days he rode on guided by the sun which burned like a copper ball in the sky. Once he killed a prairie dog and ate him without cooking.

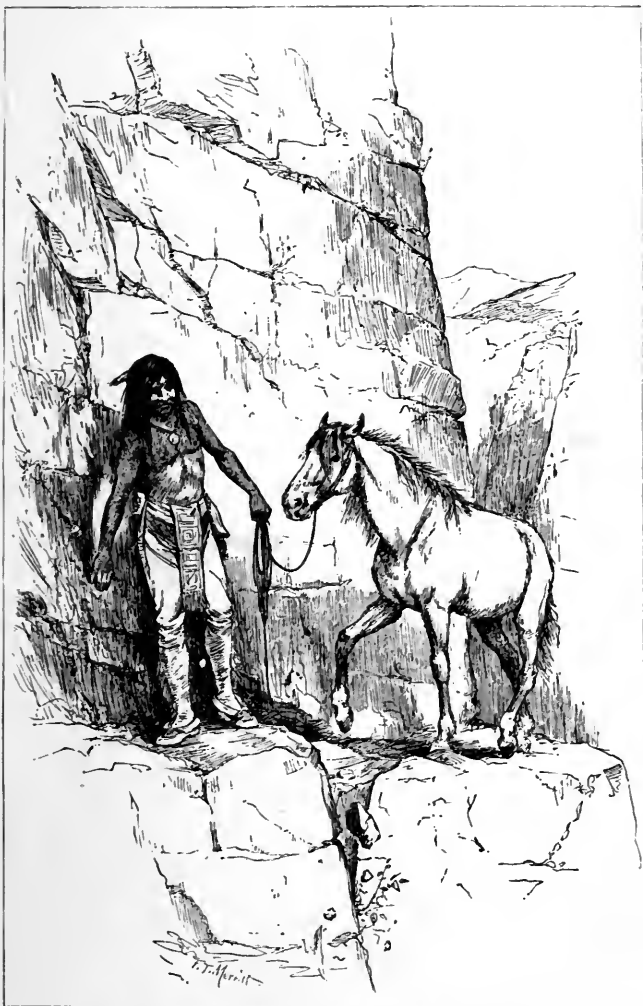
The herbage was scanty and they had found

water but once since he left the San Juan. Pony and rider were giving out when they reached a deep cañon into which they descended for the sake of the water and shade, and because Howling Wolf fancied that by following it he might reach a settlement of the Navajoes. Anything was better than the tawny plain stretching away without change for miles and miles. The cañon, which appeared to lead him nearly due south, was the wildest and deepest he had ever seen. The sun was already hidden though it was only a little past noon-day, and the sides were so precipitous that in some places they rose in sheer rocky walls almost perpendicularly for hundreds of feet. It was difficult picking his way. Sometimes it was impossible to ride, but the pony followed docilely and was as good a climber as a chamois.

After a time they struck into a foot-path cut in a shelf of the rock, which gradually mounted about a third of the way up the side of the precipice. Howling Wolf was obliged to hug the wall, for a glimpse downward sickened him. It was growing dusky in the cañon, and darkness

would increase the danger. He pressed on rapidly for he felt sure that the foot-path must lead to some human habitation — and he was not mistaken, for a turn in the cañon showed him some grand houses built into the rock, overhung by beetling crags. They looked like robber castles in this wild gorge, and Howling Wolf hardly knew whether to approach or not. He feared that such stupendous structures could not be the work of Indians, and that they were inhabited by his enemies, the whites. But he was very hungry and too tired to run away, besides there was no room in the narrow path for him to turn the pony around.

He roused all his courage and entered the first doorway to which he came. He found himself in a moderate-sized chamber utterly unfurnished and vacant. This room communicated with others, and stumbling over débris Howling Wolf explored the structure as far as he could, only to find it ruinous and deserted. The cliff-dwellings to which he was accustomed were only small caves in the rock; but he soon saw that this house of solid



THE PONY WAS AS GOOD A CLIMBER AS A CHAMOIS.



stone masonry was like them the home of a race long passed away. Without knowing it he had wandered up the wonderful Cañon de Chelly, the admiration and puzzle of antiquaries.

In the sad Southwest, in the mystical Sun land,
Far from the toil, and the turmoil of gain ;
Hid in the heart of the only — the one land
Beloved of the Sun, and bereft of the rain ;
The one weird land where the wild winds blowing
Sweep with a wail o'er the plains of the dead,
A ruin ancient beyond all knowing,
Rears its head.

On the Cañon's side in the ample hollow,
That the keen winds carved in ages past,
The Castle walls like the nest of a swallow
Have clung and have crumbled to this at last.
The ages since man's foot has rested
Within these walls, no man may know ;
For here the fierce gray eagle nested
Long ago.

Above these walls the crags lean over,
Below they dip to the river bed ;
Between, fierce-wingéd creatures hover,
Beyond, the plain's wild waste is spread,
No foot has climbed the pathway dizzy,
That crawls away from the blasted heath
Since last it felt the ever-busy
Foot of Death.

In that haunted Castle — it must be haunted
 For men have lived here and men have died,
 And maidens loved, and lovers daunted,
 Have hoped and feared, have laughed and sighed
 — In that haunted Castle the dust has drifted,
 But the eagles only may hope to see —
 What shattered shrines and what Altars rifted
 There may be.

The white, bright rays of the sunbeam sought it,
 The cold, clear light of the moon fell here, [it
 The west wind sighed, and the south wind brought
 Songs of Summer year after year —
 Runes of Summer but mute and runeless,
 The Castle stood, no voice was heard
 Save the harsh, discordant, wild and tuneless
 Cry of bird.

Dismantled towers, and turrets broken,
 Like grim and war-worn braves who keep
 A silent guard, with grief unspoken,
 Watch o'er the graves by the Havenweep.
 The nameless graves of a race forgotten,
 Whose deeds, whose words, whose fate are one
 With the mist, long ages past begotten
 Of the sun.*

The thoughts which the ruined towers awoke in
 the mind of Howling Wolf were hardly like these.
 Still the Indian lad was superstitious, and with

* From a poem by Mr. Stanley Woods, in *The Crest of the Continent*.

the darkness there settled down upon him a great awe and dread. He heard the hooting of some owls and a bat brushed by him as he crouched near the doorway. He believed that they were ghosts and that he had found his way to the Land of Spirits. But after a time tired nature asserted itself over his fears and he slept long and dreamlessly.

For days Howling Wolf lived in the haunted castle, exploring its hidden recesses in search of the Lost Medicine which he fancied might have been brought here by spirits, and subsisting on the small birds and animals which made it their home.

But he was never quite at peace. The loneliness grew upon him. Sometimes it seemed to him that he would lose his power of speech. Then he would shriek aloud to the echoes who were to him underground demons, or he would talk to his pony.

He found many arrow heads of obsidian or volcanic glass, also pieces of pottery; and in a recess he came across an earthen jar half-filled with

parched corn, which was a treasure beyond price, but he shared a part of it with his dumb companion.

At last by long searching he found a path, half-trail and half-stairway, leading to the surface of the prairie. Overjoyed he leaped downward to bring his pony, when a rumbling noise reverberated through the cañon, the castle shook and he stood for an instant perfectly still, frozen to the spot with fear. Then he darted to the room where he had left his pony. It had disappeared. He stood in the doorway, for a black well-hole yawned before him. He shouted and called his pony. A whinny answered him from the bottom of the gulf. Bending forward he could hear the pony trotting about and so felt sure that he was not injured. By degrees his eyes became accustomed to the darkness and he could see his pet not so very far below.

The floor of the room in which he had stabled him had been the ceiling of an estufa or underground council chamber which, jarred and beaten by the pony's hoofs, had fallen in, carrying the animal with it.

How was he to get the pony out? He thought over many plans and found them all impracticable without help. He must journey as rapidly as possible to the Navajoes and get some of the Indians to return with him.

He filled the earthen jar with water from the cañon and lowered it with his lariat into the pit, showering down the greater part of the parched corn and all the dried grass which he could find. Then he climbed the staircase and set out on foot across the prairie. To wander at random would perhaps be death, but in no other way could he save his pony, and he set out bravely on his journey. He had brought a gourd of water and a little corn with him, and he marched steadily on toward the south.

He had travelled for about three hours, and was now out of sight of the cañon when he paused, turned about, and looked and listened earnestly with his ear to the ground. It seemed to him that he heard the tramp of horses. So strong was the impression that he walked back for several miles until he could see the dark edge of the cañon like

a crooked thread in the level prairie. All was as lonely and desolate as when he had left it. Perhaps they were phantom horses pursuing him from out the haunted castle. Whatever the cause he had lost two good hours, and he tightened his belt, bent his elbows and set out once more on a swinging dog-trot, his long hair streaming behind him. Poor little Howling Wolf!

The lad had not been mistaken. The sounds which he had heard were made by the horses of an exploring expedition who had come to follow up the wonderful Cañon de Chelly, about which such remarkable tales had been told. At the head of the little troop and by the side of the learned Professor rode Captain Hodge, and the boy's best friend the Lieutenant. They had met the party on their return to the fort and had been detailed with a small escort to guide it to the cliff-dwellings. They had just descended into the cañon at the time when Howling Wolf had turned back and scanned the horizon so eagerly. If he had seen them he would certainly not have approached any nearer, but he would have been

filled with apprehensions as to the fate of his beloved pony.

The party moved along the cañon filled with wonder and delight at the great castle. They camped within its chambers and spent the next day excavating and making discoveries, taking photographs and gathering curiosities. The learned Professor found some rude drawings which Howling Wolf had made on one of the walls with bits of colored chalk and he immediately drew up a theory of the worship of the ancient Toltecs therefrom. As ponies predominated in these drawings, he inferred that the horse was a sacred animal with the cliff-dwellers, especially blue horses with green tails and pink ones with lavender spots. He also found hoof-marks on the floor, which convinced him that horses were anciently kept in the castle. But most startling discovery of all, as he was peering over the brink of a precipice he heard a live horse neigh. The Professor sprang back so suddenly that he precipitated his spectacles into the abyss. The Captain drew his revolver and the Lieutenant looked troubled.

"I would not have believed it possible," murmured the Professor. "I have positive proofs that this castle was built before the reign of Thothmes III. of Egypt, by the same workmen who constructed the great Theban pyramid about the year 3000 B. C. Now I had no idea that a horse could live so long."

"Nonsense," interrupted the Lieutenant. "I, too, heard it neigh. But it is probably some wild mustang which has strayed into the vaults through some opening lower down. Light lanterns, some of you, and lower me into the cavern."

"Wait," ordered the Captain, "until we have fired several volleys into this trap. It may be full of skulking Injuns."

But the volleys were not fired. Large fire-brands were brought to illuminate the interior, and they showed the pony standing alone.

"By all that's marvellous!" exclaimed the Captain. "It's the Enchanted Pony!"

"Enchanted indeed!" replied the Lieutenant; "how did he get there? and where is his little master?"

“He fell in — don’t you see there’s been a landslide or something? Most likely the boy’s buried under the ruins.”

The Captain had hardly spoken when the Lieutenant gave one leap to the bottom of the cellar. “Give me the pickaxe!” he cried; and seizing it he fell to work with the force of a giant. The others helped him, the Lieutenant urging them on, entreating them to dig more carefully. It was a long time before he would be convinced that the body of the gentle boy was not there. But at last he desisted. The final shovelful of crumbled masonry had been removed; only the hard floor remained, and no traces of Howling Wolf had been found.

Meantime the Captain had examined the pony, and to his delight found him entirely sound. “I am in luck this time,” he exclaimed, “and now I should like to see the rascally young horse-thief steal it from me again.”

“There might be two opinions as to who is the horse-thief,” the Lieutenant thought, but he forbore expressing his opinion as he did not care to

quarrel with the Captain. An inclined plane was constructed and the pretty animal led out of the pit. He shook himself with a joyful neigh and proclaimed himself "all right." As the party returned to the fort Indian stories were told by more than one — wild scampers over the prairie, hair-breadth escapes and terrible massacres.

"I'll say this for the Injuns though," said a guide, "I never knew of their cutting up 'thout somebody had first served them a mean trick. They seem to have a law — a life for a life. If a fellow is careless and kills one of them they come down mighty disagreeable on some one else; and it don't matter whether it's the party that was on the shoot or not."

"They never can be civilized," said another. "Just look at these Utes, all the Government's done for 'em; built them a schoolhouse with nice desks and they are not the least bit better."

"Yes," replied the Lieutenant bitterly, "I saw the schoolhouse when I was on the Reservation, and the agent told me he had petitioned for a teacher repeatedly without success. There stands

the schoolhouse, and the Indian children look at it with wondering eyes, but no one is sent to teach them."

"Well, 'twouldn't be no use if a teacher were sent. No matter what you teach 'em they all drift back to barbarism. There was Chipeta the wife of their great chief Ouray. She had as pretty a house as a white man, all painted up and furnished, and an orchard of fruit-trees; but when her husband died she just took to her tepee and blanket like all the rest of the wandering gang."

"Hold on," exclaimed Captain Hodge, "I'm no friend of the Utes, but I'm bound to deny this story whenever I hear it, and I'm always hearing it. The Government moved the tribe as it does about every five years, just gave them a chance to improve their lands and then ousted them. Chipeta begged hard for her home, said she would stay and live with the white people and let her tribe go. But the Government sold it over her head and turned her out of doors. It was rather hard lines, but then she was only a squaw, you know. They wouldn't have done it if her husband had

been alive, for he was the best chief the Utes ever had and kept the unruly tribe friendly to us."

The Lieutenant made a gesture of disgust: "Such deeds on the part of our Government make me ashamed of my uniform."

"Oh! that's nothing," said the guide; "but there was one thing which I saw happen which I do call kind o' mean. Our troops had surrounded a party of Injuns and we were thinning them out pretty lively, when they sent out a little girl with a flag of truce. Well, sir, they shot the child through the head and she fell dead on her flag. Somehow it seemed to me as if that wasn't exactly civilized war, but I dunno as any kind of war is."

"Better change the subject," growled the Captain, "if we go to fishing up stories of when we haven't dealt just on the square there'll be no end of them. But I tell you you can't fight Injuns as you would human beings—you might as well be a missionary at once."

The Lieutenant bit his lip and they rode on in silence. The pony trudged very unwillingly, with many a longing look to the southward, and yet he

was going toward his own pasture-grounds. The Captain was finally convinced that he had been lamed in his fall into the estufa, for he limped along in a particularly ungainly and painful manner.

They camped that night on the San Juan, for their march had been hindered by the pony, and they reached it too late for fording. The Captain hobbled the animal with his own hands and turned him loose with the other horses. "This is as safe a position against surprise by Indians as we could have chosen," he remarked as he wrapped his blanket about him, "the river protects us from attack on one side and that low line of bluffs from discovery on the other, while our horses grazing along between the two, can not wander away in either direction." He loaded his carbine and placed it beside his head. "If that little scamp of a Ute shows his head," he muttered, "I will shoot him like a dog."

Howling Wolf never knew how long he wandered on. His corn and water gave out and he found no food to take its place. He was racked by chills by night, and overhead all day rolled the

great unpitying sun, and still he came to no human habitations or saw a single human being. Still he staggered on, on, thinking only of his pony, wondering whether he had eaten all his corn or had had the sagacity to save a part. Toward the last he suspected that he was going around in a circle, and sank upon the ground spent with fatigue and hunger, and suffering agonies of thirst. He raised himself upon his elbow and looked around. Still the lonely waste. Yes, it was true he was dying all alone and the Medicine which should bring happiness to the Utes would never be found. His head fell upon his arm and two great tears scorched his copper cheeks. He was Howling Wolf still, and would never earn the name of a warrior.

At that instant he heard a gentle sigh — some one's breath was on his cheek, and a pair of soft lips touched his neck. He looked up; two great longing eyes were looking into his own, and standing over him so that his own body sheltered him from the sun stood the Enchanted Pony.

We are already acquainted with the pony's ex-

pertness at untying knots. Down by the San Juan that night, it was the work of but a few moments for the cunning creature to nibble himself loose — and then the halt with which he had been afflicted disappeared as if by magic. It would have astonished the Captain could he have seen the little Indian horse roll in the dust, then shake himself and scour away over the bluff straight toward the south. Was it some magical instinct that guided him, some second-sight or exquisite scent, keener than that of a hound, that he followed the invisible foot-prints of his little master so exactly, and stood at last above him with an almost human compassion in his troubled eyes?

Howling Wolf tried to raise himself. But he sank back with a sharp pain in his head and back. The pony seemed to understand. He knelt beside him as a camel might have done. The lad twined his arms about his neck, but he was too weak to mount the pony even in its kneeling posture. The animal whinnied in a mournful way, but the exertion had been too much, the boy's

hands relaxed their grasp upon his mane and an ashen look came into his face.

The pony got upon his feet, gazed at him a moment, and then fled like a demented creature across the level prairie.

CHAPTER V.

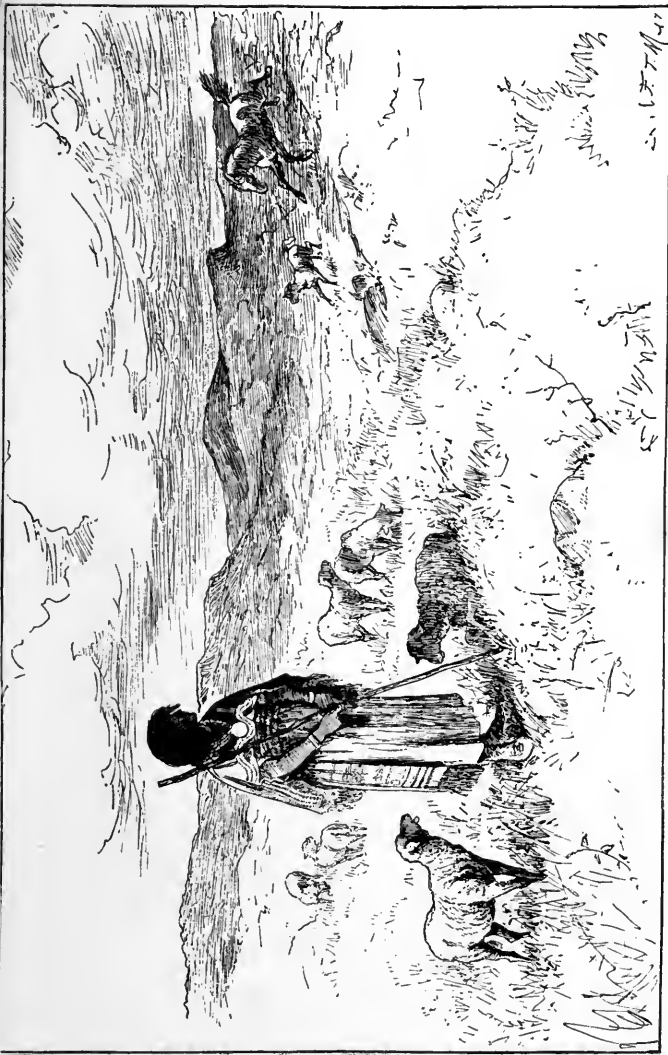
THE NAVAJO BLANKET WEAVER.

THE pony had not deserted Howling Wolf when he left him lying alone upon the prairie. A mile or two away he had passed this morning a black-faced sheep. In some mysterious way the pony now remembered it and knew that this was a domestic animal and that human beings were not far away. He found the sheep again and proceeded to worry her by nipping and twitching her wool. The sheep very properly resented such treatment. She was very nearly as agile as a Rocky Mountain goat, and she lifted up her voice and heels with one accord. How she scampered over the prairie — and the pony after her, sure at heart that she would lead him to some one who could help his little master. Around a sandy butte frisked the nimble sheep, and close at her heels cantered the pony.

There watching her flock stood a young Navajo shepherdess, a most picturesque little figure in a pink calico dress over which were belted two bright-colored shawls, secured at the shoulders by silver brooches hammered from trade dollars. Her belt was very wide and handsome, woven in gay stripes. Her hair floated in the wind quite over her face — apparently it shaded her from the sun and she liked it. She parted it now however with both hands, and gazed at the pony in wide-eyed surprise. Then, as she took in his good points, she plainly became possessed with a longing to secure and own the animal.

She approached him very cautiously. But just as she was about to snatch the bridle the pony dashed to a little distance and stood looking at her from the other side of the butte.

The little shepherdess did not give up the chase so easily. She stole cautiously near the animal — only to be served in the same manner. In this fashion the pony lured her on further and further, until, mindful of her flock, the girl much disappointed was returning to her charge, when she



THE YOUNG NAVAJO SHEPHERDESS, "WEST WIND."



heard the pony trotting behind her. The animal which had seemed so shy now followed her in the most docile manner, and even allowed her to pat his neck. A wild desire to ride the pony again seized upon the girl. The pretty Mexican saddle which had once been Howling Wolf's was no longer on the creature, but the little shepherdess was accustomed to bareback riding. She easily mounted, and the pony seemed willing to have her do so.

But once seated his gentle mood changed and he scoured away across the prairie as though suddenly gone wild. The Indian girl, though a brave one, was frightened. It was less dangerous as well as less difficult to keep her seat than to dismount, and she held on for dear life, hoping that the pony would presently slacken his pace and give her an opportunity to alight. But this he did not do, until he reached his little master.

When the girl saw the unconscious boy she was touched with pity as well as curiosity. She saw by his deerskin clothing so richly beaded that he did not belong to her own tribe, but, good Samaritan that she was, this did not matter. An old battered

army-canteen, containing water, hung from her shoulder and she at once knelt and poured a few drops between his set teeth, bathing his face, all the while making caressing little noises which were hardly words.

Slowly, painfully, Howling Wolf came back again to life. He looked wonderingly into the kind face. "I am, E-ah-te-ne-al, the West Wind," she said; and Howling Wolf who knew a little of the Navajo language smiled contentedly. The pony came near intelligently and crouched again and West Wind lifted Howling Wolf upon his back, seating herself behind the boy, and supporting him in her arms while she held the reins. The pony allowed himself to be guided, and leaving her sheep, to care for themselves, West Wind set out straight for home.

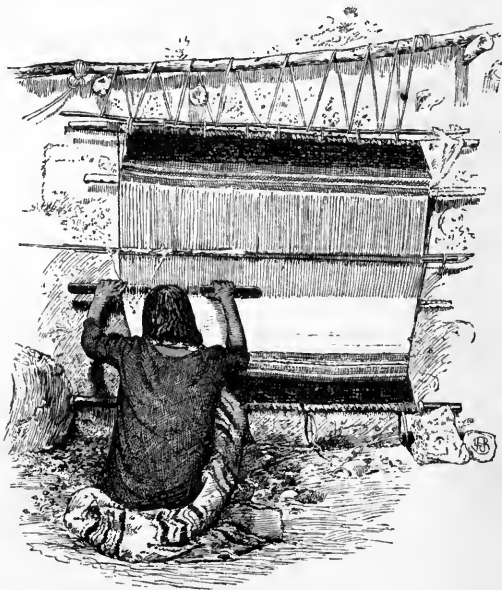
It was a poor enough home — only a "hogan," as the Navajoes call their hovels, partly dugout and partly booth. It backed against a low hill into which a cave had been dug, and its entrance consisted of two upright stakes on which a cross-beam had been placed, while the space between the doorway and the cave was thatched with

boughs. Still, rude as it was, it was yet a settled dwelling not to be moved from one pasturage to another like the tepees of the Utes. Howling Wolf, as he lay on a sheepskin, looked about at the miscellaneous articles which its Navajo owner had obtained from the whites, or which he had manufactured by his own ingenuity, with a feeling of intense respect for the opulent family to which he was so kindly introduced.

West Wind's father was a blanket-weaver, and was widely known for his original and fantastic patterns and for his startling combinations of color. His blankets were so closely woven too that they would hold water, and were always in demand at a good price at the Agency. He had even received as high as a hundred dollars for a blanket, but this was for a large one on which he had patiently toiled for an entire winter.

He had dropped his shuttle upon his knees and looked up with mild surprise when he saw his daughter before the door of the hogan—on the back of a strange pony, accompanied by a strange lad. The dog had sprung out from behind the

loom, and a pet fox from its couch on the meal bag. The mother had dropped the lid of the kettle which, propped on a few stones above a smoky



THE BLANKET WEAVER.

fire, contained their dinner of boiled corn. Two young men of nineteen or twenty had risen from some unseen corner. All had been eager inquiry and confusion. At length West Wind had been

allowed to explain how she had found Howling Wolf, whereupon the Blanket Weaver proceeded to unroll the family bedding, which had served him for a seat, and had laid Howling Wolf gently on it.

“There are not so many of the children now,” he said to his wife; “one more will not make any difference.”

“Not while the harvest lasts,” she replied, nodding kindly; “there is plenty of corn for the present and when there is nothing more to give he will not care to stay.”

They fed him and his pony with gentle hospitality and Howling Wolf soon grew to love the trustful family who took him so unquestioningly into their hearts and home.

He often passed the day with West Wind while she herded her sheep. It cannot be said that he tried to be of any assistance to her—that is not in the wild Indian nature of things. He simply lay on the grass with his hands above his head watching her while she scampered about after her charges or sat and told him stories. Howling Wolf very soon found that young West Wind was

quite as good a story-teller as Grandmother Two Tongues, and he kept her busy day after day reciting the legends of her people.

"You have a funny name," he said one day. "Why did they call you that? Is it because you are always flying about?"

The girl laughed. "Have you never heard the story of the West Wind?" she asked.

"No," replied the boy. "I only know it blows every afternoon, but I don't know where it comes from or where it is going. Tell me all you know."

"The first E-ah-te-ne-al," said the girl, "was a beautiful Navajo maiden who lived long, long ago, and she was carried away to the west by robber-tribes, some say by evil spirits. Her lover Jehumiah, the sun, mounts every day one of his herd of white ponies, that we call clouds, and carrying his blazing shield upon his arm, rides into the west in search of her. But he never finds her. So he comes back at night and sleeps in his underground hogan, and sets off afresh every morning to seek for her again."

"He must be very stupid," said Howling Wolf.

“Now if *I* were in search of *you* I would find you right away. It must be that his cloud-ponies are not as good as mine. I don't think much of that story.”

“O, that is not all,” said the girl, with a little toss of her black-tressed head. “Though the maiden may not be released, her spirit comes every afternoon to visit her home, and she strokes the faces of her friends, and whispers messages in their ears.”

“That is some better,” said Howling Wolf. “I should like that. Do you know I thought you were a spirit when you stroked my face on the prairie?”

Sometimes, instead of going out with West Wind, Howling Wolf would follow her brothers to the corn-field. What surprised him most was that they were always busy. That West Wind should herd the sheep, and the mother mind the house was not so strange to him. Among his own people the women were always industrious and he knew too that West Wind owned the sheep herself. But that the boys, Tomas and Manuelito, who among

the wilder Utes would have scorned any other labor than hunting, should every morning shoulder clumsy scythes and hoes and trudge away to fields which even a New England farmer would have thought incapable of cultivation was surprising.

There was a little water here so strongly tinged with alkali that his pony at first refused to drink it. The stream had cut itself a cañon in the sand and had sunk several feet below the level of the cornfield, but the boys had with great pains and labor built a dam which had raised the water to the surface, and had constructed little "*acequias*," or irrigating canals, down the middle of their cornfield, which caused their small ranche to look like a green oasis in the desert. But the spectacle of young braves submitting to such drudgery greatly shocked Howling Wolf. He munched the corn given him, and looked on wonderingly. He did not offer to lend a hand.

He was more interested in the work of the Blanket Weaver. He watched him spinning his wool, preparing his dyes — mysterious concoctions of barks or earths, but which kept their color much

better than the aniline dyes sold at the Agency. He soon begged for some of the colors to touch up his frescoed person, and to tint the feathers of some arrows which he was making. Still the boy felt that it was not good form to show too much interest, and he repressed all admiration and astonishment under a demeanor of lofty indifference especially when in the presence of the Blanket Weaver and his sons.

With West Wind his curiosity expressed itself in a thousand questions. What was the use of each of these articles with which the hogan was festooned? and where were they obtained? Well, that worn-out pair of boots one of the boys had received in trade for a pony from a railroad surveyor. That box of baking powder her mother had bought at the Agency store paying for it with a pair of turquoise ear-rings. The stirrups, the two tin pails and the canteen, her father had received in exchange from an army sutler for one of his blankets. Those baskets were woven by the Moqui Indians away to the south, that pottery made by the Pueblos. So said West Wind.

"Do other Indians work beside yourselves?" Howling Wolf asked in amazement.

West Wind laughed merrily: "Of course. How else could we live?"

"Does not the Government issue you rations?" asked the boy.

"No — what are 'rations?'"

Howling Wolf explained the way in which the Utes were herded and fed in idleness.

"I have heard," said West Wind, "that the Apaches are supported by the Government. But they are bad Indians. We Navajoes are not like them."

"That is the very reason," replied the boy astutely. "If you would go on the war-path the Government would buy you off. You are too good and too peaceable."

The idea seemed to strike West Wind favorably, and she talked the war-path idea over that evening with her father and the boys. But the Blanket Weaver shook his head. "That is not like the Navajoes," he said.

"No," replied Tomas "I would like to steal a

mule if I had a chance, as it is rather hard ploughing oneself with no beast, but I could not kill any one — no, not even the storekeeper at Wild Cat, who is the worst man I know.”

“Could *you* kill any one?” asked West Wind, looking into Howling Wolf’s gentle face.

The boy burst into tears. “No,” he replied, “I am only a baby. I am afraid I never shall be a warrior. But perhaps when I am a big man, if I shut my eyes very tight and ride very fast I could *shoot at* some one. I am going to try.”

“No,” grumbled the Blanket Weaver, “the Navajoes tried fighting the white people long ago and were soundly whipped; they know now that fighting is of no use. They know enough now to follow the white man’s road — it is the best Medicine for bringing luck.”

It was the first time that a Medicine had been mentioned, and Howling Wolf started. Was it possible that these Navajoes had the Lost Medicine of the Utes?

He said nothing, but determined to watch more closely and question the use of every article which

he saw. It was not long before he ascertained that there really was something which the Blanket Weaver held very precious secreted in a hole in the ground at the end of the hogan. He saw him dig it up one night when the old man thought all his family were asleep, hug and fondle it when he found it safe, and then bury it once more.

The next morning he asked West Wind if she knew of this mysterious object. She told him that it was "a Medicine" obtained at a great price from the white men by means of which they kept their home and had been prospered.

This was great news for Howling Wolf. He determined to possess himself of this object; a determination not so very easy to carry out since the Blanket Weaver was nearly always in the hogan.

Now the real history of the "Medicine" was this: A year before, two white men had come to the hogan. One was a surveyor, the other the man who kept the store at Wild Cat. They admired the industry and ingenuity which had irrigated the little ranche. "If the old man only knew it," said the storekeeper to his companion,

"he could with a little simple machinery water a vast tract of land here and have a superb ranche. It's just as well not to tell him. He knows too much already."

The two men accepted the hospitality of the simple Blanket Weaver, looked at his work and strolled about his place. Finally the surveyor, who had been making measurements, came to him with the startling information that his ranche was fully a mile outside the limits of the Navajo Reservation. "You will have to up stakes, my friend," he said. "Any white squatter could pre-empt this claim and drive you out. You have no right here."

The Blanket Weaver was much troubled. "Is there no way," he asked, "for *me* to 'pre-empt' it as you say? Can I not buy it of the Father at Washington so no settler could take it from me?"

The storekeeper looked at the surveyor significantly. The man instantly took the hint. "I could arrange it for a white man," he said. "These are free lands for any one to take up, but for an Indian it will be difficult. I never heard of an Indian

owning land personally, even on his own Reservation."

"I will pay you," pleaded the Blanket Weaver.

"I will pay you well."

"Then," said the surveyor, "bring me two hundred dollars some day to my office at Wild Cat and I will fix it all right for you."

Two hundred dollars was a great sum for the poor Indian. He had one hundred which he had obtained for the beautiful blanket on which he had worked the entire winter. A wealthy lady, the wife of a Senator, had visited the Navajo agency and had expressed a desire for a blanket of a certain size and pattern as a portière for an Indian room in her new house in Washington. The Agent had sent for the Blanket Weaver and he had taken her order, had executed it very faithfully and had recently received the money. He had felt very rich and now it must all go and more too. Still to what better use could it be put than to secure their home? He had a small herd of ponies with which the boys had hitherto conducted the farm-work and carried their produce to market. There

was nothing else which he could part with, for the women of his family would wish to keep the sheep for their wool, and for the mutton needed for the subsistence of the family during the winter. He drove the ponies to Wild Cat and sold them at auction. They brought only sixty dollars. Then he went to see the surveyor and offered him all he had for a deed which should secure him his ranche. The man was very unwilling at first to accept less than the full two hundred dollars, but at length agreed to take the one hundred and sixty if the Blanket Weaver would make him a blanket as handsome as the one which he had sold to the Senator's wife. Greatly delighted, the old man returned with the precious paper, and wrapping it carefully, buried it in his hogan. For another winter he toiled at his loom and delivered the blanket to the surveyor. The man was surprised at its beauty, and evidently conscience-stricken, for he gave the weaver a five dollar gold-piece, with which the poor man returned home overjoyed at the unexpected generosity.

He was happy indeed, for now no one could

take away his home. Nearly every night he exhumed the precious "Medicine," and prayed to it, or rather through it to the Being who had granted him this great blessing.

The longer Howling Wolf lived with this happy family, the more he saw of their contentment and what seemed to him great wealth, the more certain he became that this could only have been accomplished by magical means. Indeed West Wind had admitted as much. This object to which the old man prayed, which he hugged each night with such love and gratitude, which had brought him so much happiness and prosperity — what could it be but the Lost Medicine of his own tribe of which he was in search?

He watched his opportunity, and one day the old man set out for Wild Cat to sell a couple of saddle-cloths which he had lately finished. Howling Wolf lent him his pony for the trip, glad to do anything to secure his absence. West Wind asked him to come with her and watch the sheep, but he refused. Her mother took down the two tin pails and announced that she was going up the cañon to gather

some wild plums, and she also invited their young Ute guest to accompany her. This invitation Howling Wolf did not dare to decline, but he managed after an hour to become separated from her and to hurry back to the hogan.

It was quite deserted and open. With trembling hands he dug in the well-known spot and unearthed the treasure. He unwound the wrappings of deer-skin tied with thongs of sinews, and disclosed a large paper ornamented with a picture of Indians shooting buffalo, and some strange lines and characters variously colored.

This paper he wrapped very closely around his left thigh inside his deerskin legging, and expeditiously tied up the packet exactly as before and buried it again with great care and much haste.

Then for the first time he hesitated. He had always been taught that it was right and commendable to steal from any one outside his own tribe. But the Blanket Weaver had been as kind to him as a father and West Wind — was she not dearer to him than his own sisters? West Wind had saved his life. He thought of how she brought

him to the hogan with his languid head lying on her shoulder and her strong arms about him. They had been good to the pony too. He had grown fat and lazy on their corn. Could he do this thing to his kind benefactors?

Then he thought of his own home, of its filth and misery, of how they gorged themselves when the rations were issued, and starved until they came again. He thought of his father drunk half the time and lazy always, of his mother overworked and always tired, of Grandmother Two Tongue's stories, of their lost happiness and how he who restored it should be a prince among his people. His eyes kindled. The Blanket Weaver had had their talisman long enough. It had brought him good fortune, now surely it was the turn of the poor Utes to whom it rightfully belonged. He would carry it away, and then, when chief of his tribe, he would return—Howling Wolf no longer, but with some honorable name, and claim West Wind as his bride, and bear her away to share his fortune.

The lad hurried from the hogan impatient to be

gone. He placed the arrows which he had made in the corner which held West Wind's belongings. They were the only things he could leave her. He took a few ears of corn for his journey, and then — he thought of his pony.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LITTLE SAGE-HEN.

HOWLING WOLF felt that he could not go away, even with the precious Medicine, without his beloved pony. He would have left the talisman with all its unknown possibilities, had he been obliged to choose between the two. As it was he slunk away into the cornfield, and hid, awaiting the return of the Blanket Weaver. He did not ask himself why he stole away here like a guilty creature, when he might have met the unsuspecting man face to face without fear of detection. Even his rudimentary bit of a conscience told him he had done a dishonorable thing, and like Adam in the garden he went and hid himself.

The long leaves of the corn rustled gently and filled him with continual apprehension. Presently something hurried through the field just beyond

him. He dodged back at first, then, seeing that it was some wild creature, shot an arrow and bounded after it. It was a little brown fowl which uttered a plaintive cry and fluttered, wounded, to a short distance. The boy easily secured it, and sure that it was not teal or grouse, snipe or quail, stood wondering what manner of bird this might be, when he was startled by a louder rustling; the green masts with their drooping pennons swayed aside, and West Wind stood under the plumed and tasselled archway.

"You have shot a little sage-hen," she cried. "I have never before known one to wander into our country. They belong in the desolate Moquis lands. They are uncanny little creatures and haunt the clumps of sage-brush. Their movements are odd and shy, and they cry like a lost pappoose. The Moquis have a legend about them. But father will soon return and the corn is cooked. Let us go to our supper."

"Stay awhile and tell me the legend first," said Howling Wolf, anxious to avail himself of any pretext to avoid meeting the Blanket Weaver.

"The Moquis live in towns on high cliffs, which overlook a waste and barren country," said West Wind. "They are poor now, but they say that once, centuries ago, they were a powerful people. At that time they made war upon a wealthy Western tribe and captured Ez-mah-ah-nee-tah, the daughter of the chief. The sorcerer of her people, gathering the necessary herbs and reptiles, transformed the princess in her captivity into a sage-hen. The Moquis found that their prisoner had vanished, notwithstanding their constant watch. A strange bird had appeared in her place which so wearied them by its constant cries that they set it free. It was a prisoner still, however, being unable to leave the land of the Moquis, where it wanders timid and sad to this day.

"Sometimes the traveller hears its piteous call from the sage-brush, and if he pauses it will fly to his saddle-bow and journey with him for a little distance. But when the boundaries of Moquis land are reached it is forced by some hidden power to glide back to the cheerless sage-brush."

"I wonder what brought it from its prison-coun-

try to-day," Howling Wolf said. "I am sorry that I killed it. Perhaps it was sent to me for some special purpose."

West Wind examined the bird carefully. "It is not dead," she said. "See, you have only broken its wing. It closed its eyes because it was afraid. I will take it to the hogan, and we will nurse it until it is well."

Howling Wolf followed her reluctantly. It seemed to him that every one must know that he had stolen the Medicine from his benefactor. He stopped outside and patted his pony, and saw to his surprise that the animal had been ridden hard. He was reeking with sweat and trembling in every limb; it would not do for him to steal away at moonrise as he had intended to do, for the pony was in no condition for a long ride.

Then a sound of lamentation from the hogan smote upon his ear. West Wind's mother was beating her breast and tearing her hair, while the Blanket Weaver sat on the ground in silent, stony despair. Howling Wolf was sure at once that the theft had been discovered. West Wind, who had

sprung before him into the hogan presently returned and explained the full cause of their grief.

The Blanket Weaver on his way to town had discovered a cabin built on a corner of his land. The circumstance had not troubled him at first, for he imagined that some one had settled there in ignorance of his ownership; but when he reached Wild Cat and found that the surveyor, in whom he had confided for his right to his claim, had left the town, and that in his place was a strange land-agent, he began to be uneasy. This uneasiness deepened into the wildest alarm when the store-keeper told him that some unknown parties had "squatted" upon his claim and that he advised him as a friend to move quietly away and not to make trouble.

This the Blanket Weaver was not willing to do. He called on the strange land-agent and stated his case. The man seemed friendly enough, but he shook his head gravely. He did not think the surveyor had any right to give him a deed to the land. Still it might be all right and he would like

to see the paper — which the Blanket Weaver promised to bring on the next day.

Just before leaving he had asked the name of the settler who had preëmpted his claim, and was thunderstruck to ascertain that it was the store-keeper himself. He had ridden home in haste and had hastened to take from its place of concealment the powerful Medicine which would protect them from all evil. He did not undo the package to see if the paper was still there, but contented himself with caressing and fondling it.

Howling Wolf saw him confidently praying, soothing his perturbed spirit, with child-like faith, and his heart misgave him. Should he let him carry the empty wrappings to the office and receive the great blow which would surely come? One glance at the distracted family and the smitten man was enough for Howling Wolf. He believed all the more firmly in the efficacy of the Medicine now that he saw what calamity had come upon the family with its loss, but he could not be responsible for all this misery, no, not if his tribe remained forever in wretchedness.

He tore the paper from its hiding-place and gave it to the old man while great sweat-drops of excitement gathered on his brow. The wife of the Blanket Weaver drove the boy indignantly from the hogan, and he threw himself supperless on the ground beside his pony only waiting for the animal to rest to go away.

It was hard to be cut off thus when he had performed the most noble act of his life. Howling Wolf's heart was filled with bitterness and an evil spirit stirred within him, when suddenly West Wind stood before him. Her eyes were full of tears and great drops glistened on her cheeks in the moonlight. She took his hand, but said nothing, though her silence was eloquent with thanks and pleading.

"I must go," Howling Wolf said at last. "You have been very kind to me. Good-by."

"Do not forsake us," West Wind cried. "Something tells me that our troubles have only begun. Stay at least till father returns to-morrow from the office and we know the truth."

At that moment the old man raised the blanket

which served the hogan as door and called both of the children to supper. West Wind looked at Howling Wolf. It was the sign that he was forgiven.

"I will stay as long as I can help you," the boy said.

The next day the Blanket Weaver set out again for the town bearing with him the precious papers. He rode Howling Wolf's pony and his sons, Tomas and Manuelito, deeply interested, walked by his side. In the afternoon the little party returned, and there needed no word of explanation to tell the disheartening result of their trip. The old man's head was sunken upon his bosom and wagged helplessly as his sons supported him. The lustre and intelligence had gone out of his eyes, with the heart-breaking information that the Medicine in which he had trusted and for which they had paid so dearly was only a railroad-map worth absolutely nothing. The store-keeper's claim had been made good according to law, they were off their Reservation, and must leave their improved land and journey away into the desert.

Fortunately the old Blanket Weaver could not fully comprehend this. He still fondled his precious paper with childish confidence and allowed himself to be put to bed without remark of any kind. About midnight Howling Wolf was awakened by the wailing of the Blanket Weaver's wife, and he saw the sons bear the old man out of the hogan and lay him with up-staring eyes in the moonlight.

The Navajoes have a superstition that if a soul passes from the body within a house it can never free itself; but will continue to haunt the building until its walls are burned. To escape this calamity, the boys, who believed their father was dying, were carrying him out under the sky. Attracted by a horrible fascination, Howling Wolf drew near. The fresh air revived the Blanket Weaver, who was only in a fit. West Wind lay across his feet in silent grief, and the boy shook her, saying, "I do not think he is dying, I will bring hot stones from the hogan. Rub his hands. I believe we can save him."

The two children worked with a will, and West



THERE WAS SHOUTING AND PURSUIT.



Wind's mother seeing what they were doing joined them. The shock had been a great one; but thanks to Howling Wolf's energetic action the old man did not die. He was much shaken, however, both in mind and body. He could no longer sit at his loom, and was only happy when hugging the Medicine, and mumbling to it his prayers of thankfulness. Only Howling Wolf could rouse him from his stupor; and the family having taken him back into their confidence he remained with them in the sad, laborious days of moving.

With West Wind's approval the boys had exchanged half the sheep for a few *burros* or donkeys. On these they piled their household effects, and seated their father, mother and sister. They left their half-ripened crops standing in the fields, and the now useless loom in the hogan, and trudged stolidly along, driving the remnant of their flock while the tame fox trotted after them with the dog, and West Wind carried the little sage-hen in her bosom.

They journeyed to Fort Defiance, the Agency of the Navajoes. Although they had suffered so

much from the hands of white people the trustful family did not blame the Great Father at Washington; they were sure that he would have something for them to do.

And they were right. The agent heard their story sadly. "There is nothing for you to do but to begin a new farm somewhere on the Reservation, and it is about as well fitted for farming purposes as so many acres of clear sky. Stay," he exclaimed, "it just happens that at this time there is something else which the young men can do."

There was trouble with the Apaches, a regiment hitherto stationed in Colorado had been changed to the Department of New Mexico, and who but Captain Hodge and the Lieutenant had been sent to Fort Defiance to secure Navajo scouts!

Tomas and Manuelito heard of this opportunity for action, and joyfully offered themselves, first building for their parents near the Agency a hogan still more wretched than the one which they had formerly occupied, having the sheep with them and promising to bring back all their pay for their support during the coming winter. The Govern-

ment had offered a premium on every Apache scalp, and the feeling of Tomas and Manuelito was that they would kill, kill, until they had enough black locks to decorate many war-shirts, and perhaps there might be one red strand among them also ; for they would return by way of their old home and the wicked store-keeper must look out, for when their hearts were great with blood and gunpowder, and government whiskey, they might do great deeds. They did not tell this to their parents, for they knew that they would disapprove ; but Howling Wolf heard it, and the plan did not shock him so greatly as it ought to have done.

There was a war-dance outside the fort the night before the scouts rode away. Some of the chiefs of the tribe. Old Gandamoocha and Manuelito for whom the younger of the boys was named were there, and after the young braves had leaped about the fire in their paint and feathers and had chanted their hideous war-song, Chief Manuelito addressed them.

“I am disheartened,” he said. “I have tried to follow the white man’s road. I educated my

two sons and they have died, and I am left a blasted tree. The white men shove us on further and further from poor lands to poorer. We are of no use to them but to fight. The Apaches have done us no wrong. Some of them have married our sisters. It is no matter. We have had wrongs and our hearts are sore; we must fight some one. We are not strong enough to revenge ourselves on those who have wronged us. We will kill the Apaches instead and cool our anger with blood. So we will die, but die warriors!"

It was a strange speech, but it kindled the love of fighting in Howling Wolf's soul. He would be a warrior too, some day. He did not quite see why one should kill the Apaches however, or expose oneself to be killed by them. It seemed to him eminently more fitting to kill the store-keeper who had taken away their home and unseated the reason of the poor old Blanket Weaver. It was all a wretched muddle to Howling Wolf. Perhaps if he could have overheard a conversation between the Captain and the Lieutenant he would have understood the situation better.

The Lieutenant was happy and enthusiastic. "This is always what I have contended should be done," he said. "The Indians have made capital soldiers. Colonel Cooke says that he raised a company of Pueblos at Taos in one day, and efficient fine fellows they were."

Captain Hodge shrugged his shoulders. "It is the military policy to enlist them. The trouble is that the best fighters are against us. I should like to see you raise a company of Utes or Apaches. These Navajoes are peaceful creatures; no more spirit than cattle, except when they are thoroughly mad or drunk. But as I said before, it's policy to stir them up. It's all nonsense trying to civilize the Indians. What we want to do is to exterminate them. We must exasperate the bad Indians in order to make them go on the war-path, that we may have an excuse to shoot them and then pay the peaceable Indians to fight the war-like ones that they too may be shot."

The Lieutenant drew himself up thoroughly indignant. "I consider such sentiments unworthy of your uniform," he said.

The Captain laughed. "Wait till the campaign is over," he said. "I'll warrant you'll have trouble enough with these Navajo scouts to change all your skim-milk Eastern notions."

"We shall see," replied the Lieutenant warmly. "There are two young men who have enlisted to-day, sons of an old blanket-weaver, who have such honest determined faces that I know I can trust them. I stake my opinions on their conduct."

"And I foretell," replied the Captain scornfully, "that those very chaps will fail you. Either they'll desert like a couple of cowards at the first scent of gunpowder, or they'll get wild with fighting and go to murdering innocent settlers. Look out."

There was a school at the Agency, and West Wind had decided to attend it during the coming autumn and winter. She tried to persuade Howling Wolf to go with her, but now that the family were settled the old idea of the Lost Medicine once more held his mind in thrall. If he could only find that, everything would be straightened out. It was evident to him now that the paper in which the old man so vainly trusted was not the Medi-

cine of the Utes. He confided the entire matter to West Wind; and asked her where he had best seek for it.

"The Moquis have the most powerful Medicine Men of any that I know," she said. "The priests of the Snake Order make a poison-ointment which our Navajo braves sometimes buy with which to rub their arrow-points. Anyone wounded ever so slightly by such an arrow will die in great agony in a few days, the flesh falling from his bones while he is yet living. Oh! they are powerful Medicine Men, but very wicked. They have their great Snake Dance in a few weeks in which all the Moquis are turned into devils. Do not go to them. Stay and go to school with me."

The boy's brow darkened. "I do not like to live cooped up like the white people," he said. "They are tame like the ox and the cow, but we belong to the wild creatures—the elk, the eagle and the fox."

"But the wild creatures may be tamed," said West Wind. "There is our fox; he would not leave us now, and look at the little sage-hen which

you caught; her wing is healed, but she is contented to stay."

"That is because you keep her in a box and give her corn. Leave the door open over night, and if she stays with you I also will stay and go to the school."

With many misgivings West Wind tried the experiment. She left the door of the cage slightly ajar, but heaped plenty of corn within. The next morning Howling Wolf rode up to the schoolhouse door on his pony.

"Are we to have a new scholar?" asked the teacher, smiling.

"Ask her," Howling Wolf replied, pointing to West Wind. The tears stood in the girl's eyes. "The little sage-hen has gone to Moquis land," she said; "the enchantment was upon her, she could not stay."

The boy gave a long wistful look at West Wind. "The enchantment is upon me too," he said and rode away.

Where should he go? The scouts were breaking up their camp, in preparation to march. He

knew that he was too young to serve, but perhaps the officers would let him go with West Wind's brothers — he could ride as fast and he would eat very little.

From the head-quarters two officers were stepping down to their horses which orderlies held for them. One of the officers was quite short, and round. He wore a great deal of gold on his uniform, and he had a loud, commanding voice. The other officer was younger and slighter, and instinctively Howling Wolf determined to ask him. He circled once around the buildings to put his pony to its best paces and then dashed up toward head-quarters. The shorter and stouter man threw up his hand with an oath — and the younger man joined in the exclamation: "The enchanted pony!"

The recognition was mutual. Quick as a flash the pony's head was turned. With throbbing heart the boy urged him away from the Post out over the bluff and the level mesa. There was shouting and pursuit for a little way, then the command were ordered back.

But Howling Wolf darted on and on—away from West Wind and the school, away to the west, to the Moquis Land, away from the hated white men and away—if he had but known—further and still further from the Lost Medicine.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GARDEN OF THE GODS.

THE Denver and Rio Grand railroad threads its way through the most picturesque regions of Colorado. In and out among awe-inspiring mountain peaks, through stupendous cañons, and by the side of dizzy gorges this adventurous little railway climbs or tunnels or zigzags.

A merry party from Washington had been playing hide and seek for weeks with the great Colorado mountains by following the windings of this fascinating road. The party consisted of an old Senator, his wife, and his daughter Helen, whose clear eye took in the wonderful panorama of the everlasting hills which "God ploughed one day with an earthquake," with the deep solemnity of an earnest soul, but whose quick sense of the humorous gathered all the bits of fun in her way,

and whose sparkling fancy was a continual delight to all about her. They had passed through the Black Cañon by moonlight in an observation-car, a thrilling experience. The cliffs towered on either hand to a height of two and three thousand feet, and were so near on one side that a hand stretched from the car would have been torn from the body. The black water dashed on the other side close under the cars, and the trees were reflected in it as from a Claude Lorraine glass.

"This is simply stupendous," said the Senator, baring his head in the "pure emotion of astonishment;" "no other word expresses it."

"It reminds me of the Valley of the Shadow of Death drawn by Gustave Doré," said the Senator's wife.

In the centre of the cañon rose a wonderful pinnacle of pink stone—the Currecanti Needle. "They say," said a fellow-traveller, "that the Utes used to have their council-fires on a shelf part way up the rock. What a weird look it must have had with the firelight flashing back from the crags on the dancing red demons."



THE ROYAL GORGE, ON THE DENVER AND RIO GRANDE R. R.



"The Utes?" Helen asked. "What Indians are they?"

"A mean set," replied the Colorado gentleman, "though they do tell some decent things of their former chief Ouray. All this land was in the possession of the Utes, and when the mining fever broke out the white population just turned crazy and swarmed in upon them. The general then in command here issued an order that the miners shouldn't go a foot further without the permission of the Utes, and things looked pretty threatening when Ouray came forward, like a gentleman, and bid the miners welcome. I don't know how true it is, but he took our side at the time of the Meeker Massacre, and threatened his men with death if they did not submit. Then, too, he fed many a starving miner, and on the whole I'm inclined to credit it. No one but a Ute would have been such a fool."

"I wish I could see a Ute," said Helen. "What you say interests me in them. Are there any about here now?"

"Bless you, no! we have them pretty well cor-

ralled in the southern part of the State; and we are in hopes soon to rid Colorado of them altogether. They are a dirty, lazy, thievish set, my dear young lady, and as soon as you see them, you will say that the romance which you hear about them in the East has no foundation whatever."

"Your friend, the Lieutenant, who is to meet us at Manitou, has been stationed among the Utes," said the Senator, "he can tell us about them."

This happened before Captain Hodge and the Lieutenant had been transferred to the Department of New Mexico, and so it chanced that the two officers obtained a furlough and presented themselves one evening at the Senator's camp just above Manitou, one of the most charming mountain resorts which the world has to offer.

It was ideal camping; that old army campaigner, Captain Hodge, was hardly willing to call it by that name; for the Senator had a log house of two rooms built over a rollicking little brook, crossed at the doorstep by a rustic bridge. There were skins and rugs on the floor, lace curtains at the windows, cord bedsteads, and a dressing-table

constructed of the packing box furbished out with a ruffled muslin dress of Helen's. The cooking department was an "A" tent stationed at a convenient distance, while another of similar make was provided for their guests. But the charm of the place was in the landscape. They were surrounded by the mountains shouldering each other away to where Pike's Peak, like the Veiled Prophet of Kotahassan, kept his head shrouded in mystery. Below them was Manitou with its villas and spring houses, and Swiss chalets clinging to the mountain side. Across the mesa, just out of sight, was Colorado Spring with its busy life, while above and all around them were the Eternal Silences.

Fine horses were sent up to them every morning and the staple amusement, of which they never tired, was riding. Once they explored Ute Pass, and Helen asked why it was so named. The Lieutenant was her escort, and he replied that he believed that Manitou was formerly a favorite resort of the Utes who came down the mountains in long procession through this pass bringing their aged and sick to avail themselves of the healing springs.

"Tell me about the Utes," said Helen, "I am interested in them."

"There was one Ute boy," replied the Lieutenant, "in whom I was greatly interested;" and then he told the story of Howling Wolf, of his love for his pony, of his daring riding, his bravery and unaccountable escape. "I love that Indian boy yet," said the Lieutenant, "and am sure something could be made of him."

"Do try to find him," pleaded Helen, "and papa and I will see that he is educated in the East."

"That was my idea at first," replied the Lieutenant sadly. "I thought he would do honor to West Point. But I am afraid he doesn't want to be educated."

On another day Helen rode with Captain Hodge through the Garden of the Gods. She found this ride one of grotesque surprises. The sublime is never far from the ridiculous, and in the weird valley through which they rode nature seemed to have wearied of her grand effects, and to have taken holiday in a spirit of mimicry and caricature.

Columns of red sandstone have here been worn by wind and drifting sand into grotesque statues which the imagination may shape as it chooses. Helen kept discovering gigantic griffins and Assyrian and Egyptian deities.

One splintered pinnacle reminded her of Westminster Abbey, but the Captain, who did not quite catch the remark, assured her that he thought it looked more like a church than a woman! He proved very quick however in detecting resemblances to animals, The Buffalo's Head, Mountain Rat, the Deer, Alligator and Kissing Camels, and he pointed out the famous Seal and Bear, and entertained her with spirited stories of hunting and racing.

"I owned a pony once," he said, "which I would have liked to see yours, Miss Helen. It knew nearly as much as a human being. The Indians all called it 'the Enchanted Pony.' It beat every race in which it was ever entered, and as a trick-pony had no superior in any circus."

"How did it happen," Helen asked, "that you parted from such a treasure?"

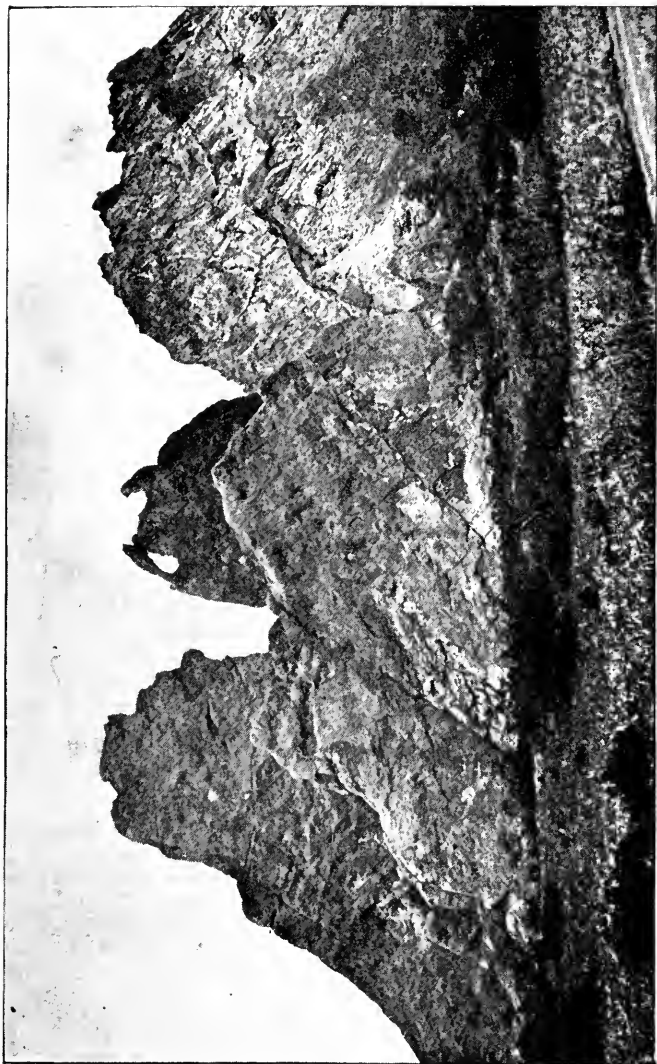
"A little sneak of an Indian stole it from me," the Captain replied with some wrath. "I found it afterwards secreted in an old cliff-dwelling and thought I had secured it finely, but on the first night after my find the young rascal stole it from me again. I presume he has taken it to the Apaches. I hear that Geronimo has been raiding up through the northern part of New Mexico, and has been securing all the horseflesh he can lay his hands on. The Indians all help one another, and although the Utes are apparently at peace with us just now, I haven't the slightest doubt that they play into the hands of the Apaches."

"I wonder whether you will ever find your pony again," Helen said musingly.

"If I do," replied the Captain, "will you do me the honor to accept it at my hands?"

"I fear that would be entirely too valuable a present," said the startled girl.

"Nothing would be too precious for you," replied the Captain, growing very red in the face. "Such loveliness as yours would melt the heart of a — Great Cæsar! if there isn't an Indian."



IN THE GARDEN OF THE GODS: THE SEAL AND THE BEAR.



Helen turned, hardly knowing whether to be most frightened or relieved. At the foot of one of the wildest shaped rocks stood a woman of more than ordinary stature. She was clothed in a dress of deerskins fringed and richly embroidered with quills and beads, and strange tassel-like ornaments of hair fastened at irregular intervals across the front. Helen did not at first comprehend that these were scalp-locks, and she looked at them with simple curiosity. A belt of leather bossed with silver confined her singular drapery to her person. She held a pointed stick with which she had been digging at the foot of the rock, and her face with its setting of floating gray hair was so wild that it instantly suggested Meg Merrilles.

"She is a Ute," said the Captain; "I thought they were not allowed off their Reservation," and he addressed the woman roughly in her own language.

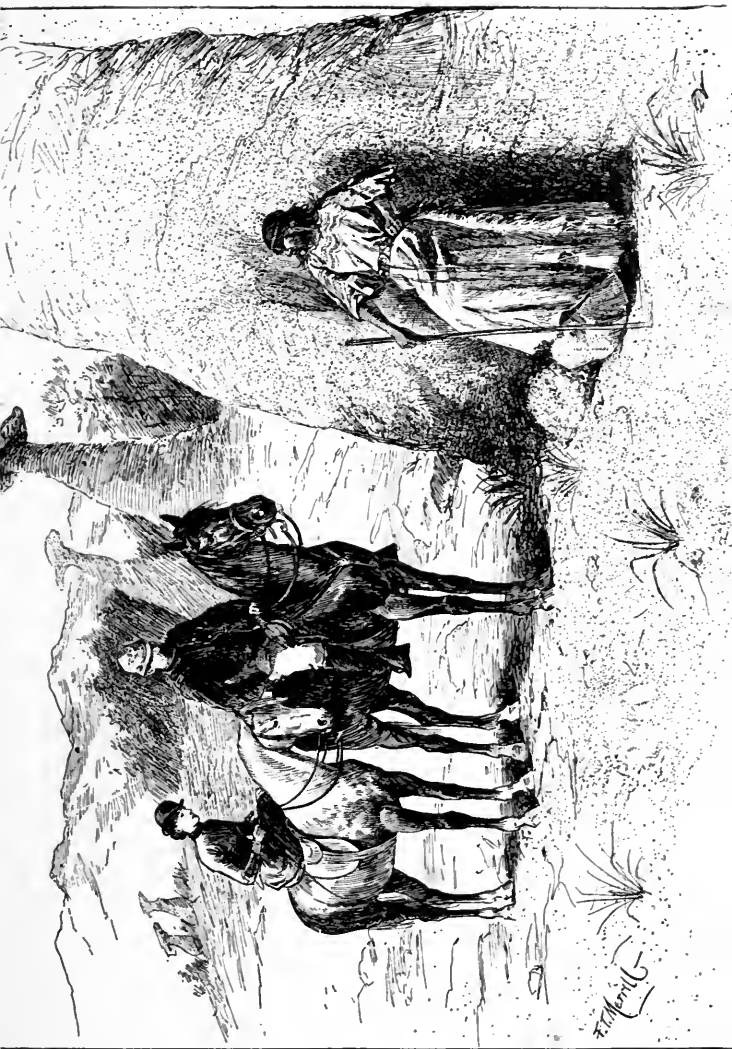
"What does she say?" Helen asked, as the woman replied volubly with many expressive gestures.

"She is crazy," replied the Captain, "and

ought not to be allowed to ramble at large. She says that her name is Two Tongues, that she is the sister of a chief, and that she has come to this country to search for the Lost Medicine of the Utes. Her face is strangely familiar to me. I am sure that I have seen it before. Ah! I remember — when I was on the trail of that little Ute horse-thief she threw herself in our way and tried to persuade us that he had gone north to the Uncompagres. She may be shamming insanity now. They are all great liars.”

This was not the last time that Helen was fated to meet Grandmother Two Tongues. The next day she visited one of the mineral springs for which the place is famous. It was one in which many coins had been found, deposited there by the Indians as offerings to the healing spirit. Outside the door, parleying with the keeper, stood the weird woman whom Helen had seen in the Garden of the Gods.

The doorkeeper appealed to the Lieutenant. “The woman is evidently crazy,” he said. “She wants to examine the spring, and says that there is a powerful charm belonging to her nation buried





in it. Of course we can't have her here. Will you keep her talking while I slip away for the proper person to arrest her?"

"Why, I know her!" exclaimed the Lieutenant; "she is the grandmother of Howling Wolf, the boy of whom I told you, Miss Helen. I well remember how she tried to turn us from his trail."

Helen's mind seemed to her to turn a complete somersault. Then the boys of whom the Lieutenant and the Captain spoke were the same person; but they had given them very different characters. Which was the true one? Was Howling Wolf a horse-thief, or were there two enchanted ponies? Was the Lieutenant mistaken, or had the Captain told her a falsehood?

While she was puzzling over these things the Lieutenant engaged the witch-woman in conversation. She recognized him instantly, and began to beg piteously for her grandson. She soon caught Helen's dress and begged her to intercede for the return of the boy.

"What does she say?" asked Helen, half-frightened, half-touched, by her evident distress.

"She thinks that we must have captured Howling Wolf as he has not returned to his own tribe. My good woman, I have no idea where your grandson is. I shut him up in an old cliff-dwelling, but he vanished in the night like smoke, and I am much obliged to him for not having first chloroformed us all with a scalping knife."

The gate-keeper now returned with the authorities, who led the woman away screaming and struggling with all her might.

"What will they do with her?" asked Helen.

"She will be sent back to her Reservation, from which she is now miles away."

"But do you suppose there is any truth about the charm in the spring?"

"Perhaps so," replied the gate-keeper; "it is a wonderful healing spring, and if you are troubled with muscular rheumatism, or poison ivy or nettle-rash" — but Helen had walked away.

That evening they talked of wild life and of the Indians. "This is all play-camping," she said, "with game that has been brought on ice for a hundred miles on the cars, and trout sent over

every Friday from the hotel. There is none of that delicious sense of insecurity, of being miles away from any other white person, with Indians and bears and wolves prowling near, and all that sort of thing. Here there is not a speck of danger except from father's rifle which has not been cleaned for a month and may go off sometime when the maid takes it into her head to dust it."

"I'll tell you what Miss Helen wants," exclaimed Captain Hodge. "She is pining for a little real campaigning. She'll enjoy a scout with the troops on the open plains, such as Mrs. Custer sometimes took part in with her husband. Now I propose that you all go back with us to Fort Lewis. The railroad takes you on the way through some of the finest scenery in Colorado. The Toltic Gorge is sure to make you dizzy. Why, you can pitch a stone from the car window fifteen hundred feet down into the cañon and there are the Sangre du Cristo Mountains; and if you choose to go on to Silverton there is the Las Animas Cañon which beats Switzerland any day."

It was a long speech for the Captain.

"Your programme is a fascinating one," said the Senator; "we will consider it."

It would probably have been adopted; but a few moments later a telegram was placed in the hands of the Captain which created nearly the same effect that a lighted match might have done in a powder magazine. When he quite recovered his breath he explained that the Apaches were on the war-path, and that his regiment had been transferred to the department of New Mexico, where he and the Lieutenant were ordered to report without delay.

"It is possible we may meet again," said the Senator, "for we shall go down to Santa Fé for the autumn."

"If I come across the Enchanted Pony," said the Captain, "I will send it to you at Santa Fé."

And as they parted, and the Lieutenant took Helen's hand for a moment, he too preferred a request:

"If I find Howling Wolf, as I may, for I fear he has gone to the Apaches, may I send him to you? I will gladly provide for his support if

I live ; and if I should be shot may I rely that you will find the proper school for him ? ”

And Helen gave back the frank friendly look. “ If you live we shall share this work together,” she said ; “ if you die,” and her lip quivered, “ I shall regard it as a sacred trust.”

The first military duty which Captain Hodge and the Lieutenant were called upon to perform in the new department, was the enlistment of Navajo scouts. To do this it was necessary for them to make a long, perilous journey straight across a portion of the country frequently raided by Geronimo, the chief of the hostile Apaches, to Fort Defiance, a lonely outpost now used as the Navajo agency. Here among the newly-enlisted men the Lieutenant was particularly struck by the manly, honest bearing of two young men, Manuelito and Tomas, sons of an old Blanket Weaver who wandered about the Post in a crazed condition. The Lieutenant had spoken to the old Weaver, for there was something in the man's appearance which suggested the wreck of noble things ; but he had only replied by complaining

that he had been brought far from his ranche, and he wanted to go home.

"How is this?" the Lieutenant asked of Tomas.

But the uncomplaining youth did not explain. He touched his own forehead significantly, and persuaded the old man to wander back to his wretched hogan, and the Lieutenant had no idea of the great wrong which had been done the poor creature.

Just as they were setting out on their expedition, a boy mounted on a beautiful pony came riding swiftly toward them; and just as the Captain and the Lieutenant fancied that they recognized Howling Wolf and the Enchanted Pony, he wheeled and skimmed over the mesa. They followed hotly, but the pony and its rider disappeared so quickly that they were almost inclined to think them an apparition or a trick of their own imaginations.

That evening, however, as they sat by their little camp-fire after their first day's march, Manuelito approached the officers respectfully. "That boy," he said, "that runaway boy, nice pony, know him heap."

"What!" exclaimed the Lieutenant, "do you know Howling Wolf?"

The man's simple face brightened. "Yes, all same Howling Wolf, Ute boy, know him heap."

"He is a young thief," said the Captain. "That is my pony."

Manuelito looked up incredulously. "Ute boy, Ute pony, all same. Know pony heap—nice pony, nice boy. Live my father, eat heap corn—all same brother."

"Do you know where he has gone?" the Lieutenant asked.

"Ute boy, maybe gone home," replied Manuelito.

"That's so," assented the Lieutenant, "that's the most likely conclusion to make. Of course he has gone back to the Ute Reservation," and taking out his writing materials he began a letter to Helen detailing his adventures, and another to the Ute agent begging to be informed should Howling Wolf appear in the bosom of his family.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SNAKE DANCE.

AS Howling Wolf rode on the country grew more and more waste and desolate. The only animals which he saw were the nimble prairie-dogs, and here and there a rattlesnake which rustled through the dry grass. The yucca rose here and there from its bayonet-like spikes, a fountain flower, its white bells glistening in the sunlight like bubbles. The pony, accustomed for some time past to good feeding, scorned the dry herbage and whinnied discontentedly.

Away on the western horizon Howling Wolf could see the bluffs of the Province of Tusayan, where lie the seven towns of the Moquis, and he urged on the lazy and unwilling pony. He had looked from time to time for the little sage-hen. It would not have been strange if he had met



HOWLING WOLF MEETS "EZ-NAH-AH-NEE-TAH."

F. V. Merrill



numbers of them, but he had a superstitious feeling that the very one which had escaped from West Wind would appear and serve him as guide.

He had nearly reached the foot of the butte however before there was any sign which even his credulous imagination could regard as supernatural guidance. In a little copse which skirted a small stream, where he stopped to water his pony, he unexpectedly came upon a young woman who was gathering willow-withes for basket making. She was decently clad and wore a precious necklace of moose-teeth and charms. Her abundant black hair was parted in two portions and arranged on each side of her head in great bows or wagon-wheel puffs. She looked at Howling Wolf in wide-eyed surprise.

He addressed her civilly in the sign-language, which is a medium of communication between different tribes, asking her name and nation.

"*Ez-mah-ah-nee-tah* (the Little Sage-Hen)," she replied; and Howling Wolf instantly concluded that the shy, mysterious fowl had been allowed to take a bodily shape, to communicate with and di-

rect him; and when on learning that he had come to see the snake-dance, the young woman told him that her husband was one of the dancers, and was at that moment collecting reptiles on the mesa, to be used in the ceremonies, and invited him with simple hospitality to visit with them until the festival was over, he accepted the offer with gratitude.

Wolpi, the village to which they were going, is situated on a butte, or ledge, overlooking the prairie, and rising from it like an island from the sea to a height of nearly five hundred feet. At first sight the sides of the cliff seemed almost perpendicular; but his guide showed him a tortuous, narrow path winding between the clefts.

Arrived at the summit, Howling Wolf found himself in a large village built of adobe, or sundried bricks, and of stones rudely cemented together and plastered with mud. Some of the houses were two, three and even four stories in height, the upper rooms opening upon the flat roofs of the lower ones. The town was swarming. Beside the usual inhabitants there were a number of visitors in the town, attracted by the approach-



THE MOQUI VILLAGE OF WOLPI.



ing festival. These were Indians of different tribes as well as of the surrounding towns, and two or three white men. With characteristic pride in their ceremonies and generous hospitality the poor people had given of their best to these strangers, in several instances vacating their own homes, and camping in the open plaza, that their guests might be lodged.

The horses and burros of the town were turned into a corral, or enclosure, and the Enchanted Pony was herded with the rest, exciting remarks of admiration from all who saw him. Among others a dark-looking, under-sized man who was standing near the gate of the corral patted it, examined its good points and asked Howling Wolf what he would take for it. The boy assured him that the animal was not for sale. "How far can he travel in a day?" the man asked, disregarding Howling Wolf's answer.

"I left Fort Defiance this morning," said he.

The man started, ever so slightly. "Were there any blue-button men there?" he asked.

Howling Wolf told him that there were officers

forming a company of Navajoes to fight the Apaches. The man's long taper fingers clenched; but he remarked indifferently: "Your pony has made over sixty miles, and does not seem tired, he could do more at a push." He took out a long purse filled to the brim with Mexican silver dollars. "Name your price," he said.

Howling Wolf still shook his head.

"I could take him for nothing," said the man.

The boy smiled. In a civilized community, in the towns and cities of white people, Howling Wolf might have feared for his pony's security; but here among a people considered expert horse-thieves he knew that he was perfectly safe.

Later in the evening he was regaled with an abundant supper of jerked beef fried with onions, and a dessert of delicious peaches. He ate rather more than was good for him, for he had not tasted beef since he had left his own home, and the peaches were a great luxury. Ez-mah-ah-nee-tah told him that they possessed an orchard of this fruit in a little fertile valley miles away. She showed him a large and curious-shaped basket,

which she had braided from the leaves of the yucca; there were ears or loops of horse-hair attached to the sides through which she could slip a leather strap, which she passed around her forehead, the basket resting on her shoulders. In this way she was in the habit of bringing a half bushel of peaches at a time, she said, from their distant orchard. She showed him also other very beautiful baskets of her own make. They were flat or saucer-shaped, of coiled structure very closely woven and decorated with gay colors and original designs. They might almost have held water, and were used for the finest of meal. Howling Wolf could not help admiring the ingenuity displayed; and as he remembered the skill of the Blanket Weaver a new desire sprung up in his heart—to be able to make something beautiful. He had never felt so before, and he wondered at himself.

After the supper the boy amused himself by sitting on the roof and watching the busy life of the town. The dancers, one hundred and thirty young men, who formed the secret society of the Snake Order, were descending into the underground es-

tufa, or council chamber, to spend the night in incantations and orgies. As they passed, the Sage-Hen sprinkled them with sacred meal. They marched on chanting a strange song and waving little wands decorated with eagle feathers. A tall Indian followed the procession to the door of the estufa, but did not enter. He was however treated with such consideration that Howling Wolf was sure that he must be a distinguished guest, and was not surprised when told that he was a celebrated Medicine-man of the Zuñis, a member of the Prey Brother Priesthood, a great hunter and magician.

In an angle of a building not far away he saw too the man who had wished to buy his pony. There was a woman with him, who, he was sure, was not a Moqui, for her hair was not arranged in the wagon-wheel rolls.

"Who are they?" he asked, pointing them out to the Sage-Hen.

"She is a stranger," Ez-mah-ah-nee-tah replied. "She has taken refuge with us while her husband is away with the Apaches."

“But is not that her husband?”

“Who?” said the Sage-Hen; “there is no one with her.” And Howling Wolf looking again saw that the woman was alone. She had drawn her shawl over her head and Howling Wolf noticed that it was a Mexican one, of sky blue *crêpe*, embroidered with green parokets and crimson dahlias, which seemed to the boy a very beautiful combination. Presently she too glided away and the night came down grand and silent except for the tom-toms in the underground *estufa*.

The next day was the great day of the dance, and all was excitement in the village. The best rooftops had been rented for the spectacle, like so many stalls at the opera. At one end of the plaza was a stone altar around which the Snake Order marched, chanting dismally. They wore tunics, reaching nearly to the knee, and attached to each leg a rattle made of a turtle's shell. The faces of the dancers were painted, the upper half black and the lower part white. They seemed to Howling Wolf a band of grotesque demons. Shuffling, dancing, they approached a huge sort

of basket containing about two hundred coiling, writhing serpents. Into this mass an attendant would thrust his arm, and hand each dancer a snake. The dancer would seize it firmly in the middle with his teeth and pass on, the creature struggling about his face. Each man in the procession held two eagle's feathers with which he teased the snake and endeavored to keep it from burying its fangs in his face. Nearly all the reptiles were rattlesnakes and they kept up their angry rattling, and sometimes coiled themselves about the necks of their persecutors.

The men continued their dance until it seemed to Howling Wolf that he would go crazy with horror; round and round their arms waving in the air, the loathsome reptiles writhing, hissing, striking at the men who held them. Surely West Wind was right and the men of Wolpi were turned by their incantations into fiends incarnate. Not for all the medicines of all the sorcerers would he remain in this place and learn such dreadful rites.

After what seemed several hours to the terrified

boy, but really at the close of about thirty minutes, the men suddenly threw all the reptiles in one wriggling heap. The Sage-Hen and several other squaws who, robed in white, had been set apart to the task of sprinkling the dancers with prayer-meal, rushed with loud shrieks from the plaza, and at a given signal the men ran to the pile of snakes and seizing as many as they could hold, dashed down the precipitous sides of the butte and scoured away across the plain to the four points of the compass, only throwing down the snakes when nearly out of sight, and then returning, panting but still running, disappeared one by one in the estufa. To Howling Wolf's alarm several large rattlesnakes escaped this final gathering-up, and disappeared in the crevices of the buildings. It was for this reason that he looked closely at his arrows and was pleased to see that his quiver held one with a long slender reed and a point made from a broken knife blade sharpened to a razor's edge.

As he walked down to the corral to water his pony he stopped in a deserted lane to look at some

wooden effigies held very sacred in Wolpi arranged in a booth of green branches ; and a feeling almost of scorn came over him. They were doll-like figures, brightly painted, and on their heads they bore



A MOQUI IDOL.

representations of villages, pyramids of blocks in stories like short flights of steps. It was the old myth of Atlas sustaining the world. And this was the creature whom the Moquis believed sustained their villages ! It would be very easy to

carry it off on his pony ; but Howling Wolf was perfectly sure that this was not the Lost Medicine of the Utes. On the summit of each of the little houses or villages waved an eagle's feather, and that was a sacred emblem in his tribe as well as with most

of the Indians. He was just wishing that he had an eagle's quill to feather his arrow-shaft when he heard an ominous rattling. One of the escaped serpents was near. Yes, there it was gliding from a bunch of red peppers along the parapet of the opposite house, and just beneath, with her blue crêpe shawl draped carelessly about her, the green parokets and crimson dahlias rising and falling on her bosom, sat a beautiful woman. She heard the sound, but mistook it for an expected signal, for she raised her head and whispered :

“Geronimo !”

The serpent glided on. In another instant its fangs would be buried in that oval cheek, but the knife-bladed arrow was on the string and whizzed from Howling Wolf's hand pinning the reptile to the wall. At the same instant the low dark man, whom Howling Wolf had seen twice before, who had just entered the lane with the Zuñi Hunter Priest, and who had totally misunderstood Howling Wolf's action, sprang upon him like a panther, drawing from his belt a savage scalping-knife. But the Prey Brother held his hand. “Look,” he said.

"The boy meant your wife no harm. On the contrary he has saved her life."

He drew him to the wall and showed him the transfixed rattlesnake. "A nice shot," he commented critically; "the boy is worthy to enter our priesthood."

The shorter man having assured himself that his wife was uninjured, turned to Howling Wolf, his look of rage changed to one of gratitude. "Come with me," he said. "I coveted your pony yesterday, to-day I covet you. You are worthy of each other. You will make a great warrior. Come with me; you know not who asks you, or you would not shake your head."

"I know. She has spoken your name. You are Geronimo, the enemy of the white man."

"And are you the white man's friend?" asked the Apache.

"He has done me no harm," Howling Wolf replied.

"Wait, then," said Geronimo bitterly. "That answer shows how young you are. The white man will treat you to injuries enough if they are what

you want, and when your heart is big with hate then come to Geronimo and he will teach you to revenge."

With that the man and woman disappeared and Howling Wolf was left with the tall Zuñian, whose appearance he liked better than that of the Apache.

"You were right," said the Hunter Priest, "not to go with him. He hunts men and his game will turn upon him. Come with me and I will teach you to be a great hunter of all other kinds of game. The Prey animals of the six regions; the mountain lion of the North, the sheep of the Western mountains, the wildcat of the great land of summer—the wolf of the East, where live wolfish men by the great Ocean of Day, the mole of the underworld and the eagle of the upper regions of air, for each of these I have a Medicine and none can resist my power."

"Good," said Howling Wolf impulsively. "I will go with you. But first I must bid farewell to the Sage-Hen."

Early the next morning the Hunter Priest and Howling Wolf set out from Wolpi, each mounted

on his own pony. Ez-mah-ah-nee-tah had presented the boy a basket of her weaving which served him as knapsack and contained food. Though it was scarcely light when they descended the mountain, and none of the village were astir,



A WOLPI BASKET.

there were fresh hoof-prints before them — Geronimo and his wife had descended the pass fully two hours in advance of them, and had been met at the foot of the cliff by a small party of Apache warriors, who had been raiding the surrounding country in search of horses. Their success had

been poor and they met their chief with only five indifferent farm-animals. Geronimo was displeased. He was even alarmed, and was on the point of returning to steal the Enchanted Pony and others of the Moquis; but on being informed by one of his scouts that a party of United States Cavalry were in camp, in a ravine at a little distance, he changed his mind.

This party had come out in search of him without having any idea that the game they sought was so near. They were sleeping, even the sentries dozing; the horses were hobbled at a little distance.

Very cautiously Geronimo approached until his men had stolen in between the soldiers and their animals. Quickly the ropes were cut and every Indian mounted. Then with hardly a sound the entire herd were driven over the tufted prairie silently and swiftly out of sight, and the command which had camped that night as mounted cavalry woke in the morning to find themselves a company of foot, not a hoof for officer or man, or a pair of ears for the Quartermaster's department.

An angry man was little Captain Hodge, a

deeply chagrined man the young Lieutenant. Manuelito and Tomas, his pet Navajo scouts, shook their heads and laughed sheepishly. The men talked with all their might, some indignant, others frightened, all utterly astonished. The entire camp was transformed into a buzzing nest of hornets. And straight toward this hornet's nest, utterly unconscious of the danger ahead of them, rode the Hunter Priest and Howling Wolf.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TURQUOISE EAGLE.

THE Hunter Priest and Howling Wolf had ridden only a few hours when the elder drew rein and pointed to the ground all trodden and marked with hoof-prints.

“Ugh!” said the Hunter Priest.

“Ugh!” replied Howling Wolf; “Apaches?”

“No — horses all shod. Brass-buttoned men.”

Howling Wolf pointed to a cañon which showed itself in the distance like a crack or seam in the prairie. From this crack slender lines of smoke were rising. “Ugh,” he said; “camp.”

The Hunter Priest shook his head in a puzzled way, and examined the hoof-prints more carefully. “Fresh trail, not more than two hours; horses all go other way — go fast, trot, gallop. Left camp hurry — all gone.”

Convinced that the camp had suddenly been abandoned and that possibly something of value to themselves might be found on the ground the two rode confidently toward it. They had proceeded about a mile when the pony showed signs of uneasiness. He sniffed the air and repeatedly turned aside. Howling Wolf took the alarm. "He knows that there are soldiers still there," he thought, and at the same time it struck him that the camp-fires, instead of going out as they would have done had they been abandoned, were burning more steadily, and that several more had been lighted. He communicated his doubts to his companion, and the two drew rein. At the same instant two figures appeared on the edge of the cañon, two officers whose uniforms glistened in the morning sun. One was tall and slender, the other short and round. The short man held a field-glass, with which he swept the horizon.

Excellent as were the lenses the boy recognized the Captain before he made out the two Indians, and was effecting his escape before pursuit had been ordered. The Hunter Priest waited a mo-

ment longer, but when he saw the two soldiers joined by several others and heard the notes of a bugle, he turned and scoured across the prairie after Howling Wolf.

At the same time two Indian runners, Navajo scouts, started from the camp and set out after the retreating Indians at a steady dog-trot. It seemed absurd for footmen to strive to overtake mounted horsemen, and so long as the two kept their horses at full speed they distanced their pursuers. But the horse of the Hunter Priest began to flag, and his curiosity was excited when he saw that they were followed only by two apparently unarmed Indians. He stopped accordingly and waited for them to come up. Howling Wolf, more cautious, rode further on and witnessed the parley from a distance. Suddenly the pony whinnied joyfully, and turning trotted toward the new comers. "He knows them," Howling Wolf said to himself, and a moment later he also recognized Manuelito and Tomas.

They told him of the loss which the troops had just sustained and asked if the missing horses had

been seen. The Hunter Priest could only give it as his opinion that it was the work of Geronimo.

"Where are you going?" Manuelito asked of Howling Wolf. The Hunter Priest replied that he was taking the boy with him to hunt in the Zuñi Mountains.

"Good," said Tomas; and he explained that these mountains were not far from the old ranche where they had spent so many happy days, and that the Captain had said that the troops were to march to the nearest telegraph-station, which happened to be Wild Cat, where they would wait until provided with horses. The probability was that they would remain at Wild Cat for several days, and that the two scouts would have an opportunity to visit the old ranche and secure various pieces of property which they had left in their hasty leave-taking.

"Good," said Howling Wolf, "I will meet you at the ranche in three days."

"And we will salt much corn," laughed Tomas.

Then they shook hands and the scouts turning trotted back to the camp. Captain Hodge was

angry when he saw them come in empty-handed.

"Why did you not bring back those Apache horse thieves with you?" he asked sternly.

"No Apache; Zuñi Indian no steal horse, own pony," said Manuelito speaking in broken English.

The Captain who had watched the interview through his field-glass, and imagining treachery supposed that of course they would lie to him, continued: "If you could not catch up with the Indians why did you not return before?"

"Catch him easy," replied Manuelito. "Zuñi pony no good."

"I saw you," thundered the Captain. "You did not catch the pony at all. The Indian rode back to meet you. What did you talk about for so long time? You were plotting mischief."

"Other pony good, yes;" and catching the Lieutenant's eye he explained: "Other pony that Howling Wolf."

"What!" exclaimed the Lieutenant. "Howling Wolf! Why didn't you bring him in?" and the

Captain fairly shouted with rage : "And you let the young scoundrel off again with my pony, when I have no doubt he was concerned in the stealing of our horses beside ! You are a pretty scout ! Lieutenant, I congratulate you on your various pets."

"Howling Wolf no steal our horses," Manuelito replied calmly. "Geronimo, he got em this time most down Mexico."

"The fellow is right," said the Lieutenant ; "I do not believe that Howling Wolf was concerned in stampeding our horses, though I do wish Manuelito had brought him in."

The scout looked at the Lieutenant steadily as though to fathom his purpose with the lad. "Maybe see Howling Wolf some more," he said.

"If you do," said the Lieutenant eagerly, "and will bring him to me, I will give you — one, two, three, four, five dollars."

"And if you let that pony slip through your fingers again," said the Captain, "I'll give you — one, two, three, four, five whippings — do you understand?"

The scout's brow clouded but he did not reply. When he talked with the Lieutenant he felt sure that the white men meant well to Howling Wolf and to the Indians in general, but of this little Captain he was not so certain.

There was no time now for further parley, for the command were ordered to break camp, and to march as infantry across the country to the nearest railroad and telegraph station, the town of Wild Cat, familiar to the two scouts from the wrong there inflicted upon their father.

When at liberty they strolled by the store and looked in with darkened faces, but a stranger stood behind the counter dispensing whiskey in the place of "Grab-em-all-Joe," the man who had turned them from their happy home. Manuelito's clutch on his revolver relaxed.

"He is over at the ranche, most likely," suggested Tomas. "Perhaps you better not go. I get boots and canteen for you. You get too much pretty soon mad."

"No," replied Manuelito, throwing open his hands. "no more get mad. No use."

They idled about the station filled with the greatest wonder by the manœuvres of the telegraph operator whom they called "the wire listener." The Lieutenant, who found them trying to understand the young man's explanations, added his own, making it clear to them why they could not telegraph to places where no lines existed. Manuelito's heart was won. He looked up at the Lieutenant with a mixture of shyness and frankness. "If I bring you Howling Wolf," he said, "Cap'n Hog, he catch his pony?"

"No," returned the Lieutenant, "I will have a talk with the Captain, and buy him off. The pony belongs to the boy, and he shall keep it."

"And Howling Wolf go when he please? come when he please? stay, eat, ride all same me, all same Tomas?"

"Yes, I promise you sacredly that I am Howling Wolf's friend. He shall be perfectly free."

"Then," said Manuelito, "to-morrow, two days, Tomas and me go find Howling Wolf, bring him back *sure*."

The Lieutenant was delighted with this prom-

ise and he hurried to the Captain to speak to him in reference to the pony, little knowing how impossible it would be to induce him to renounce this long-coveted object.

In the meantime the Hunter Priest and Howling Wolf rode away toward the mountains. Hunting with the Zuñian was a religious observance to be undertaken with certain rites and ceremonies which he now explained to the boy.* He took from a little pouch suspended about his neck a fetich, or image of an animal, on which was tied an arrow-head. "This," said he in his own dialect, "is the image of the mountain lion, the great prey-animal of the North; I found it in the mountains. It was consecrated by the priests and now it is my peculiar fetich; possessing it I can hunt all the animals which the mountain lion preys upon; the buffalo and the deer and the bear. It is the most powerful fetich of all the regions. It is for you now to go alone to the mountains and seek fasting for your fetich."

* Mr. Frank Cushing's article on Zuñi fetiches, in the Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology, 1880-81, is the author's authority for the superstitions described in this chapter.

Howling Wolf examined the little image. "I can carve a much better representation of a lion than that," he said.

"That would not do," the priest explained. "Years ago the Maker of Men killed many of the great prey-animals with his arrows of lightning. Killed them, but left their bodies shrivelled and turned to stone in the mountains. When you find these strangely-shaped stones you find really the body of one of these fierce animals made smaller, but with the same hungry instinct, the same cruel heart-longing to prey upon the lesser game-animals, and if you bind it upon your own heart it will lead you straight to your game and give you power over it. You cannot choose your own fetich, or tell what species of game you would rather hunt; you must find your fetich, and hunt the particular animals over which it gives you power."

The Hunter Priest left Howling Wolf beside a lonely butte, and rode on to his town, promising to return on the morrow and to consecrate whatever image the boy should find. Howling Wolf led his pony by the bridle and sought carefully



HOWLING WOLF SENDS HIS MESSAGE TO THE GREAT SPIRIT.



among the rocks. He found many splinters of obsidian or black volcanic glass, which he saved to make arrow-heads, a few petrified shells and leaves, but no concretions resembling animals. The grey wolf would give him power over the eastern country; with a wild cat he could hunt the antelope toward Mexico in the south; and with a coyote he could follow the mountain sheep to the western sea. But he longed especially for the mountain lion which would make him a hunter in his own northern land the mountains of Colorado.

There were lava beds in these mountains, believed by the Indians to be the blackened blood of a slain giant. Among these Howling Wolf wandered when in a dark cranny his eye was caught by something bright and shining. It was silver, virgin silver, in irregular nodules—a rich vein cropping out to the surface—a find which would have made the fortune of any white prospector. The boy did not know the wealth that lay before him, and it would have done him little good if he had realized that he had discovered a valuable silver mine, for he could not have secured its

possession in any legal way. He loosened the ore from the rock with his knife and after digging for some time in it found what delighted him quite as much as the ownership of the mine would have done — a small nodule of silver somewhat resembling a bird, streaked on the wings with turquoise. Here was his fetich — which gave him power over the winged creatures of the upper air.

He descended from the mountain and mounting the pony rode toward Zuñi. He reached the town at nightfall faint with hunger. The Hunter Priest received and fed him, but the town was quite as dirty, though not so poverty-stricken, as the Moqui villages; and on the whole Howling Wolf was not pleasantly impressed. No life would henceforth seem quite so desirable to him as that which he led with the old Blanket Weaver. Still the desire to do something had awakened within him, and he was pleased when the Hunter Priest expressed his surprise that he had been so soon successful in his search for a fetich, and pronounced it one of the most unmistakably powerful ones which he had ever seen. He took it to the

Keeper of the Deer Medicine, who shaped it very slightly — marked the eyes, bored a hole through the body by which it could be suspended during ceremonies, and bound upon its back with a bit of deer's sinew an arrow point of pink chalcedony.

"Now," said the priest, "you may seek for any winged creature, or for any of the small animals upon which eagles prey ; rabbits or prairie dogs or even young antelope. For what will you hunt?"

"I would like," said Howling Wolf, "to capture an eagle."

"But the eagle is a sacred bird," replied the Hunter Priest, "and you may not kill it. You may rob it of its tail feathers, which are very valuable, by plucking it alive ; or, if you are able, you may take him alive and clip his wings. But you may not kill the lord of the upper regions of air, the mediator between man and Heaven. This is a belief which is common to all the Indians whom I have met, and even the Black Robes, the priests of the white men, believe with us that the eagle is the messenger between God and man. They have it painted in their churches — but very badly, so

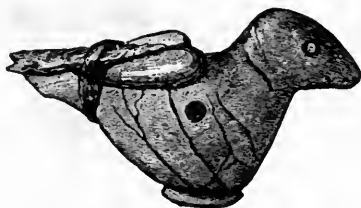
that it resembles a dove—and they call it the Holy Bird or Holy Spirit.”

“Then if I had an eagle,” said the boy, “and wanted at any time to send a message straight to the Great Spirit, and you would write it for me, all I would have to do would be to tie it to the eagle’s leg or wing and let him go, and Manitou would have my message.”

“Without doubt,” replied the Hunter Priest.

“Then,” said Howling Wolf, “I will capture an eagle.”

The keeper of the Deer Medicine and others of



THE TURQUOISE EAGLE.

the old hunters laughed, but the Hunter Priest frowned at them.

“The boy will do great

things,” said he, and taking out his writing materials and turning to Howling Wolf, he asked: “What is the message which you wish to send to the Great Spirit?”

"Write," said the boy, "Howling Wolf asks Manitou to help him in finding the Lost Medicine of his tribe."

The Hunter Priest wrote, or rather painted, on a strip of bark as requested; and very early the next morning the boy started on his hunt. He had received directions from his friend and he stole out of the town fasting before any one was awake. Away to the northeast was a lonely butte from which rose abruptly a splendid crag known as the Navajo Church. By hard riding he could in one day reach this pinnacle. It was not far from the old ranche, and he had often seen eagles majestically sailing about its spire. Very likely there was an eagle's nest upon the summit.

All day Howling Wolf rode steadily on, talking to his pony for lack of other company. "We are going on a hunt, pony," he explained, "and you must be quiet and not start the game." The pony pricked his ears sagaciously as though he understood all that was said. Perhaps he did, for a little later he stopped suddenly and turned squarely round. Then when Howling Wolf shook the reins

for him to go on he reached his neck backward and gently bit Howling Wolf's toe, but did not utter the slightest noise.

His attention thus sharply drawn the boy looked keenly about him ; and there, right in his path, its long ears alone showing above a clump of sage brush, sat a large cotton-tailed rabbit, destined to be the first prey of the turquoise eagle. Drawing his bow string to his ear, the knife-bladed arrow whizzed on its way, and the rabbit speedily lay across his saddle-bow. He did not pause to build a camp-fire and cook himself a savory dinner. No morsel of food must pass his lips until he had secured the nobler game to which he had destined this expedition, but the rabbit would be excellent bait for the eagles, and this first success put new courage into Howling Wolf's heart.

He reached the foot of the mountain just at sunset. He shaded his eyes from the red glare as he looked up to the spire of the Navajo Church. Yes, slowly wheeling about the crag, buoyantly floating, rising, sinking with scarcely a perceptible flutter of the strong pinions, was a magnificent

grey eagle. His plan for its capture was a common one, frequently adopted by Pueblo eagle-hunters. Turning his pony loose, he climbed as far as it was possible. Then collecting branches of pinyon-trees he partially roofed a small chasm in the rocks, making for himself a hiding-place. Concealed within he could still view the sky through a large hole in his green roof. On the roof he laid the rabbit which he had shot on his way, and which though very hungry he had not tasted—it was to be the lure for his lordly game. He fastened one end of his stout bow-string to the rabbit and the other to his own wrist and then lay down in his little cabin waiting the success of his plot.

The night was partly passed when these preparations were completed, and the strong wings were no longer visible. He knew however that the eagles were not night-birds, and that it lacked several hours to dawn. He was very weary and not a little hungry and he fell asleep confident and happy, his hand crossed upon his breast where nestled the turquoise eagle and the prayer which he hoped soon to send to the Great Spirit. No

one had ever taught him how to pray; but from the depths of his own soul had sprung this yearning which refused to be stifled and had found this way to "mount up on wings as eagles" and lay his heart's desire before his God.

So trustfully, prayerfully, Howling Wolf slept — until just at daybreak he was awakened by a sudden tug at his wrist. Confused as he was he had presence of mind sufficient to pull the cord with both hands and with all his might. The eagle's claws were entangled in the body of the dead rabbit, and he was dragged through the aperture of the roof into the darkened cabin. Howling Wolf quickly threw his Navajo saddle-cloth over the noble bird's head, but even then its struggles were so terrific that he had great difficulty in subduing it sufficiently to pluck the tail feathers which he wished as a proof of his victory, and he found it next to impossible to affix his prayer to the bird's leg. The cabin was filled with beating wings, and Howling Wolf's hands and even his face were scratched savagely by the eagle's talons. But at last the missive was securely attached, and bear-

ing his captive out into the light of day he liberated him. Straight up to the sky darted the heavenly messenger, and Howling Wolf bowed his head in thankfulness, little suspecting that he was himself a young, wild eagle for whom a trap had that day been laid, and that his friends Manuelito and Tomas were the lure to lead him into captivity.

CHAPTER X.

ON THE WAR-PATH.

WEST WIND, at Fort Defiance, was having her troubles as well as her successes. School-work was not difficult for her, for though she had been accustomed to an out-of-door life she was used to very hard labor. She was bright and anxious to learn, and soon took her place as the leading scholar and also the favorite of the school.

Her troubles were at home. It was not poverty alone, or the loneliness which had come into their lives now that Manuelito, Tomas, and Howling Wolf had gone; but the old Blanket Weaver's mental trouble increased and he was no longer contented, but was continually asking to go home. He wandered about the Post asking the way to the old ranche, or beseeching the teamsters to

take him there. It was pitiful and it made West Wind's heart ache to hear him beg for his loom, and tell of the beautiful blankets which he longed to weave. "I want to go home," he would whimper; "take me home, child, I have bought some beautiful dye stuff at the store, such blues and reds! I will make you a blanket—such a blanket! Where is the loom? Why are we staying in this little hogan? Why do we not go home?"

One day West Wind came back from school to find her mother in fresh trouble. The old man had wandered away. There was a lame mule at the stables which had been abandoned by Captain Hodge on his last visit to the Post, and the person in charge had thoughtlessly lent it to the old man, supposing that he only wished it for a short trip.

"Don't be worried, mother," West Wind said cheerily, hastily munching her dinner, a piece of cold corn bread, "I will soon find him and bring him back. The herder will lend me one of the donkeys, and I will overtake that old mule before night-fall."

It so happened, however, that West Wind lost

important time by starting in the wrong direction. She came back at night disheartened and her mother would not allow her to start out again.

How it was that he found his way no one ever knew; but the Blanket Weaver on the halting mule rode straight to his old home. It was deserted, for Grab-em-all-Joe had built a smart house for himself in another part of the land. He tied his mule, and entering the hogan, seated himself at his loom and was soon absorbed in filling his shuttles.

But unfortunately Joe had seen the Indian cross the farm, and, leaving his ploughing, he ran to his house for his shot-gun and stealthily stole up to the hogan. The old man heard him as he approached, and turned his kindly face toward him with a bright smile of recognition. He had forgotten every wrong, and only remembered the early days of their friendship, when the store-keeper had bought his saddle-cloths and rugs. But Joe's evil conscience could imagine no other cause for the presence of the man he had defrauded, than a desire for revenge; and, covering him with his rifle, he ordered him roughly off the

premises. The old man's face clouded, and as he hesitated, the ruffian ruthlessly shot him down.

The murderer let loose the mule and strode back to his house, somewhat dissatisfied with himself. He did not believe that there was any general plot against him on the part of the Indians, but he tried to convince himself that the deed was one of self-defence. Why was he there if not from evil intent? And at any rate there was no telling what he might have done if he had been left to his own devices.

He at last determined to ride over to Wild Cat and report the case to the authorities, and as the military were now there, it might be well to ask for a guard for a few days, for an uneasy feeling had taken possession of him.

While the gentle old man who had never wronged any one lay dead in his hogan beside the loom on which he had labored so industriously, Howling Wolf who had just captured his eagle was thinking of joining Tomas and Manuelito. He was very hungry and as his fast might now be broken he built a fire and made an excellent meal

from the rabbit which had served as bait for his eagle.

As he finished his breakfast, he noticed a slender line of smoke rising from another promontory far away in the southwest. He observed it with idle curiosity at first, and then as the cloudy column wavered strangely, as though fanned by a blanket, he realized that this was a signal-fire. It was the Apache mode of telegraphy. Geronimo was probably not far from that thread of smoke; doubtless he had scouts in this vicinity, and he had mistaken Howling Wolf's camp-fire on the Navajo Church for a preconcerted signal. Howling Wolf laughed softly to himself as he wondered what news his smoke had carried across the country. Then he grew grave; lives might be lost by the broiling of his breakfast. He hastily trod out the smoking embers, and descending the mountain found his pony and rode away toward the ranche.

On the way he fell in with Manuelito and Tomas and told them of the signal-fire. "That is good news for the Lieutenant," said Manuelito;

"the horses will be sent on to-morrow and we will follow up that smoke."

"Geronimo wanted me to go with him," said Howling Wolf.

"Better go after him with us," replied Tomas, speaking freely and fluently in the Navajo language. "Geronimo is a bad man and he is injuring all of the Indians, for he makes the white people think we are all like him, whereas we are nearly all trying to follow the white man's road; and, Howling Wolf, we too have had a wrong idea of white men. We have only seen bad white men like Grab-em-all-Joe the store-keeper, who used to cheat the Indians. But I believe the greater part of the white men mean kindly to us. Since we have been with the brass-button men I have become sure of this. There is the Lieutenant. He knows you, Howling Wolf, and he told me if you would go back with us he would be your friend. We have always found him good to us, have we not, Tomas?"

Tomas grunted an emphatic consent, but Howling Wolf shook his head doubtfully. "What does

he want of me? I let him alone, why can't he let me alone?" he asked.

"He likes you," said Manuelito.

Howling Wolf laughed mockingly.

"What are you going to do?" asked Manuelito. "The winter is coming, you say you are not going with Geronimo, you are many miles from home — what will become of you?"

Howling Wolf bared his breast and showed the fetich. "I will hunt," he said. "See these eagle feathers. Manitou gave them to me. Manitou takes care of the coyotes — he will take care of Howling Wolf."

"See here," said Manuelito impressively, "Manitou is taking care of you; he has sent the brass-button men to give you food and clothing. We trust them. They have been good to Tomas and me. Come with us."

Howling Wolf thought for a moment. "I do not trust *them*," he said, "but I trust *you*. I will go with you."

"Good," said Tomas, "then let us go back at once. We met Grab-em-all-Joe a little while ago

as we rode over from Wild Cat, and though we turned aside to let him pass he threatened us if we dared set foot on the ranche."

"I can see the hogan now," said Howling Wolf. "There is some one there. I can see a horse at the door with a red saddle cloth."

"Listen!" cried Manuelito. "Do you not hear the Navajo death-wail? Come, quickly."

But Tomas caught his brother's arm. "It is impossible that there should be Navajo Indians there now," he said. "What you hear must be evil spirits."

Manuelito spurred his horse forward and the others followed. At the door of the hogan stood the lame mule, whose doleful braying must have been the cry which Manuelito had heard. The hogan was silent and apparently deserted, yet all hesitated to enter. Howling Wolf was the first to do so, and never, to his dying day, will he forget the sight which met his eyes. He knelt beside the murdered Blanket Weaver and tried to restore him to consciousness, chafing his hands, and raising his head. But it was too late. Manuelito and

Tomas regarded the boy's efforts with deep but unexpressed feeling. At length Manuelito roused himself. "We must hurry," he said. "Grab-em-all-Joe may soon return and shoot us all, and there is much to do. As father has died in the hogan his soul cannot get out until we have pulled the walls down. We will therefore bury him at once, and make clear way for his spirit."

A shallow grave was quickly dug in which the old man was buried, and the hogan was levelled above the grave.

Tomas, searching about the premises, found some tar of the pinyon-tree, which he smeared on all their faces as a sign of mourning, and as a protection against Chinde, the devil.

This done the little party were preparing to proceed to Wild Cat in order to report the affair without delay to the Lieutenant, when Grab-em-all-Joe suddenly appeared with his guard of soldiers. He was greatly excited when he saw the demolished building, and called loudly upon the soldiers to fire on the Indians. The men recognizing the scouts refused to do this, but arrested



"LET GO MY BEAR!" SHOUTED THE STRANGE INDIAN.



the entire party and marched them off toward headquarters.

Only Manuelito and Tomas were bound. Howling Wolf rode beside Tomas. He was thoroughly frightened. "I shall get away," he said, "at the fording of the creek. I shall go back to the Navajo Church. If all is right you can call for me there to-morrow."

At the creek he found the opportunity he expected and dashed away up a little side-cañon and off across the darkening prairie. The men were too few to follow and at the same time guard their prisoners, and he was unpursued.

All the next day he waited in his eyrie, but no one came. Toward evening he killed a prairie fowl and cooked it as he had done the rabbit. And again as before there was an answering column of smoke, but this time from a little copse of trees only a few miles distant. It gave the lad a sense of companionship to know that there was some one near, talking with him though he could not understand what was said.

He sat patiently waiting for news from his

friends, when he heard a shuffling sound at the foot of his rock. Then his pony gave a shrill scream and started across the plain at a gallop. Howling Wolf grasped his arrows, for he knew that just below him, though concealed by the overhanging rock, was some enemy. His first impulse was to rush to the edge and see what the threatened danger was. But he restrained himself; as he had not seen the creature so probably it had not yet spied him. He lay flat upon his breast and listened acutely. The shuffling continued with a heavy lumbering sound as though of some large body brushing against the side of the cliff. Presently there was a scratching and slipping—the creature was trying to climb up the rock—accompanied by a sniffing and grunting, which told him plainly that his pursuer was not one of the soldiers as he had at first imagined, but some great animal, attracted by the fragrance of his supper, probably a bear, anxious to share his meal with him and ready to devour his host as second course.

Very cautiously Howling Wolf crept to the edge of the rock, to find his fears realized. There was

a huge grizzly bear climbing up the ragged wall toward him.

The boy gripped his fetich, and then turned sick as he thought how powerless it was in the present instance. Of what avail was a great eagle against a mountain bear? The beast saw him now and crept a little nearer, snuffing in a significant and unpleasant manner. Howling Wolf rolled some loose stones to the edge of the precipice, and sent them crashing down upon the brute. One of them struck the animal upon his nose and clapping his paw to the injured part, the creature lost his hold and rolled to the ground. But it was only infuriated by the pain, and in no way disabled. Growling savagely it proceeded to make a more deliberate survey of Howling Wolf's citadel, and seeing a more easy way of mounting again climbed, this time surely and successfully, to the summit. Howling Wolf saw that his only safety lay in flight, and as soon as the hairy muzzle appeared above the wall he made speed to leap down from the other side, leaving the brute in undisputed possession of the little plateau. Then he set out at a run in the direction

in which his pony had taken. At first he could not see his four-footed friend; but on giving his peculiar wolfish howl, the faithful creature appeared from behind a butte and approached his master doubtfully.

Throwing a glance over his shoulder Howling Wolf saw the reason for the pony's hesitation. The bear was pursuing him at an easy trot, and gaining upon him rapidly. It was in vain that he whistled and entreated; the pony dashed about in a circle, would approach him trembling, and then, panic-stricken, wheel and canter away. He loved his little master, but Howling Wolf was subjecting his friendship to too great a test.

Howling Wolf could hear the bear panting behind him, and, desperate, snatching his tomahawk from his belt, he turned and hurled it at his foe. Attempting at the same time to run backward, he fell and before he could recover himself the bear was upon him. He had missed his mark. As he felt the pressure of the animal's fore-foot upon his breast, he abandoned all hope of life.

Still the instinct of self-preservation was strong

within him and with the strength of despair he attempted to throttle the creature. As he did so his fingers felt something under the shaggy hair; a collar! The animal was not a wild one, but a half-tamed pet escaped from its owner; and so accustomed was he to subjection that when he felt the boy grip and twist the collar, he lifted his paw and submitted, growling.

Howling Wolf stood up, still keeping his hand upon the collar, and sorely puzzled as to what to do next. The pony, astonished at the turn which matters had taken, but not sufficiently reassured to approach, trotted back to the Navajo Church. The bear also seemed inclined to return in that direction, and Howling Wolf concluded to accompany him, and they proceeded together, each equally distrustful of the other. On his way he managed to pick up his tomahawk, with which he felt a little safer.

Suddenly an Indian approached him mounted on Howling Wolf's own pony, and shouting in the Apache tongue: "Let go my bear! What are you doing with my bear?"

Howling Wolf laughed. "What are you doing with my pony?" he asked. "Get down and I will be glad enough to change."

"Your pony!" retorted the strange Indian, "it is easier to say that than to prove it."

"You will believe it, perhaps," Howling Wolf replied, "if I order the pony to throw you and he obeys me."

The Indian replied with a derisive gesture, at which Howling Wolf uttered a cry and clapped his hands, whereupon the pony planted all of his feet close together and humped his back rapidly. Off went the Indian, and Howling Wolf, daring now to leave the bear, sprang to the pony's back.

The strange Indian rubbed his shoulder good-naturedly. "Who are you?" he asked; "and what are you doing around the Navajo Church?"

Howling Wolf explained that he was waiting for friends now in the custody of the soldiers at Wild Cat. The strange Indian scowled savagely.

"You will never see your friends again," he said. "I have just come from Wild Cat, where I have been exhibiting my bear. (I live in a cave

under this mountain and when I wish to know what is going on I take my bear out and exhibit it.) The two young men, your friends, are to be hung. They have been ordered to the next fort as prisoners."

Howling Wolf nearly leaped from his pony. "Hung!" he exclaimed, "Manuelito and Tomas hung!"

"Yes," replied the other stolidly, "for an attack on the ranche of Grab-em-all-Joe, and for communicating with the Apaches by signals when they should have been tracking them as scouts."

"It is false," cried Howling Wolf. "I will go to the Lieutenant and tell him. I was with them. They made no attack. They have made no signals."

"Who would believe you? The soldiers caught them in the act of tearing down a house at Joe's ranche. Let them hang. There were signals. I myself saw them—a fire from this rock, telling the Apaches that the brass-button men had left this region—a lie—and Geronimo believed it for he is near. I saw his answering smoke this morn-

ing and hurried back to set the danger-signal. They are traitors to Geronimo. How did they find out our signals? Why did they get permission to leave Wild Cat long enough to make the fires and then go back again, if not to lure the Apaches into danger and then betray them? Let them hang."

"If this were true," Howling Wolf exclaimed, "the soldiers would not wish to hang them. I made the fires myself."

"You?" exclaimed the old Indian, laying his hand upon his knife.

"I made them to cook my dinner. I had no idea that they would be taken as signals."

"But what were you doing here at my lookout? Fifty years have I been Medicine-Man and seer for the Apaches. I travel before them with my bear and the Navajo Church is an old signal-station of ours, the northernmost one we have. Geronimo never ventures so far except when he sees the smoke banner waving from its summit. Lucky if I am not too late to warn him. What were you doing here, I say?"

"I was hunting eagles," Howling Wolf explained, pointing to the cabin which he had built and extending the feathers. "You are a Medicine-Man," and you know the value of these. Take them as a present, and if you have any charm that will save my friends give it to me."

"I have no charm," replied the Medicine-Man, "but Geronimo may be able to rescue them. Ride straight to that saddle-shaped mountain, and when you reach it if there is a buffalo's skull on the summit, keep on to the south. You will find the Apaches in the next cañon."

Howling Wolf hesitated. "When are Manuelito and Tomas to be hung?" he asked.

"They are to be sent to the fort with a small escort to-morrow. They will never leave it alive. If you wish to save them your only hope is to get Geronimo to stampede the party on their way to the fort."

"And this is what they get for serving the white men!" Howling Wolf mused bitterly.

"Treats them right," replied the Medicine-Man, striking his bear roughly; "the only luck-bringing

Medicine for the Indian is the war-path. In fighting he may be the match of the white man; in treachery and cheating he can never be his equal."

"Is this the answer?" thought Howling Wolf: He had asked Manitou to show him how to find his Lost Medicine; was it to be recovered only through blood? He thought of the old Blanket Weaver murdered in his own home, of his friends sentenced to death for no crime, and he drew a long bow and shot an arrow in the direction of the United States camp. "I will try it," he said. "Good-by. I am going to Geronimo. We will see what help there is in the war-path."

CHAPTER XI.

WITH GERONIMO.*

THE report which the Apache Medicine Man had given Howling Wolf, however, was only partly true.

Shortly after Manuelito and Tomas had started for the ranche, the horses expected by the troops had arrived. A little later the smoke-signals had been discovered, and the Lieutenant had been detailed with an escort to ride toward the Saddle Mountain and discover what they meant. During his absence the guard detailed to the ranche at the request of Grab-em-all-Joe, returned with the

* The account of Geronimo's raid given in this chapter while not a detailed report of any one of his numerous Rob-Roy adventures, aims to be a typical picture true in general characteristic. While it is largely drawn from the author's personal observations in the West, she is also indebted to the reports of Generals Crook and Miles and to the writings of Captain John G. Bourke, Lieutenant John Bigelow and Mr. Edwards Roberts.

Navajoes. Captain Hodge was furious. "Here are the Lieutenant's pet scouts, Manuelito and Tomas, caught in the act of committing depredations on a white settler and suspected of communicating with the enemy! I rather think he will have less to say now about trusting Indian auxiliaries."

He would listen to no explanation, but ordered them sent under arrest to the nearest military post. Certain as he was of their guilt his sense of justice or rather love of formality, told him that they ought not to be executed without more investigation than he had now time to make. This matter was hardly off his hands when the Lieutenant returned reporting indications of Apaches near by, and the command was instantly in motion.

It was early morning, but the scouts who sought for the trail in advance of the troops reported fresh hoof-prints; those of a single pony. For a long way they followed them, until they blended into the trail of a mounted troop. Howling Wolf had joined Geronimo.

Much to the boy's disappointment there was no

attempt made to rescue his friends. Geronimo had made a bold dash much further to the north than he was supposed ever to raid, attracted by cattle pastured here by extensive cattle owners. He would not have ventured so far had he not been deceived by assurances of safety from the smoke-signals, and now, with United States' troops pressing him closely in the rear, he had no time for any one's business but his own. Straight for the south with a line as direct as the bee makes through the air the troop started for Mexico. They were well mounted now on the horses which they had stolen from the cavalry. He had secured several hundred head of beeves as well and was ready to return to his stronghold in the Sierra Madre. But he had not counted on being so hotly followed. He had imagined that it would take the soldiers longer to secure fresh horses, and on the evening of the first day's march there was a brisk skirmish with the advance guard of the troops and the cattle were abandoned.

Howling Wolf rode by the side of Geronimo's wife. She had a kind face and she wore the blue

crêpe shawl much soiled, but embroidered with still gaudy paroquets and dahlias. Once Geronimo suggested putting Howling Wolf on another horse as he had himself taken a liking to the pony, but the woman took the boy's part, and the change was not made.

On and still on ! Twenty-eight hours at a stretch in the saddle, the pony doing good work and keeping up with the best. Then there were hurried halts at lonely ranches and bloody deeds which frightened Howling Wolf, murder and pillage and fire marking their way as they fled. In the hard lines which marked Geronimo's face the boy saw only cruelty and indomitable will ; but the face softened when it turned toward his wife, and the woman told Howling Wolf how Geronimo had once ventured into a fort where she was a prisoner and although surrounded by soldiers had managed to rescue her. She had insisted on accompanying him on his last raiding expedition, but finding the country roused he had left her with the Moquis and had been driven back into Senora without her. His present wild dash through the country had for its

prime object finding her again, though he had been tempted farther east by the great herds of the cattle-men.

“He has risked his life for me many times,” she said proudly. “The whole country is afraid of him. He has tired out the army. General Crook has caught him more than once, but has found him harder to hold than water in his hands. As for the Mexicans, ugh! they flee if one but utter his name.”

As they went further south the country became more and more sterile; but their commander knew where to find the rare springs, and the Apaches could ride an entire day under the burning sun without water. They frequently ate their beef raw for fear that the smoke of fires would discover their whereabouts. They encountered a sand storm at one point, which was hailed with joy, for they skimmed lightly through it, while they knew it would cover their tracks and confuse and embarrass their pursuers.

It was after this tornado that Geronimo gave orders for a halt. Some of the men scattered chasing

wild turkeys, others constructed small wigwams with branches and blankets for the steam bath, of which the Apache is as fond as a Turk. Stones were heated and placed in the centre of the tent, and water dashed upon the stones filled the enclosure with steam. After this came a plunge into the river, then a sleep and a meal of roast turkey, and the band awoke ready for another long ride which carried them across the border and into Mexico. Here there was a skirmish with the National Guard, the Mexicans verifying the prediction of Geronimo's wife and fleeing after the first shot.

And now the vegetation grew denser and more tropical in character. Cactus of many species, some higher than a man's head, and covered with flaunting blossoms, odorous night-blooming cereus abounded, with parrots and humming birds more brilliant than the flowers winging everywhere. They raided a ranche and supplied themselves with tropical fruit, and more cattle, and then turned toward the mountains. Over the foothills covered with groves of scrub oak and then up the

gorges of the Sierra Madre. Only cedar now; and further on the trail led over rocky promontories bare of all vegetation, but a little river dashed down the rocks and settled here and there in deep tanks and pools, affording abundance of water for their stock.

Howling Wolf was deputed to help drive the cattle and he found this no easy task, for the trail was narrow and steep and sometimes led by the side of dreadful chasms. Now and then a poor ox lost his footing and rolled down the precipice breaking his neck in the gorge below. Up and still up; and now they began to find signals — skulls of animals arranged in a peculiar way. "That means," said Geronimo's wife, "that they are all well and expecting us. How glad I shall be to see my children again! See, I have brought them some shoes and a doll," and she showed Howling Wolf a pair of pink satin ball-slippers taken from a Mexican store, and a china doll from some American home.

It was the first indication that Howling Wolf had had that there were other Apaches in this

mountain fastness awaiting the arrival of Geronimo, but presently smoke-signals were seen in the daytime in answer to their own, and beacon-fires at night. The men were happy and more careless. They sang and in intervals of rest played cards, joked and fished for trout.

At length, on one peak sharper than the rest, sentinels were discerned, and then a turn through a narrow pass, which might have been easily defended by a few against an army, showed them a grassy valley and in it a double row of lodges, before which women were working and children playing. There was immense excitement as the party descended into this stronghold. Wives greeted their husbands, children were carried upon their fathers' shoulders. Happiness was so universal that Howling Wolf who stood a little apart to observe the meeting, was convinced that at length the Lost Medicine was found, and that it lay in vigorous resistance to the United States.

For a time all went merrily in the mountains. The children played at hunting or fighting, carrying imaginary raids into the heart of the States

and bringing away droves of cattle and booty. What the children played the elders did in earnest, and Howling Wolf wandered with his fetich on many a lonely hunt, or descended with the braves for a wild dash on some Mexican *hacienda*.

But winter came with snow and bitter cold in these high altitudes and the band broke up, a few returned to their Reservation with promises of good behavior; but there were more who did not dare to do this. Some had committed crimes, at first under the influence of whiskey which transforms an Indian into a fiend, and which had been illegally sold them by white men, and now knowing themselves to be liable to arrest felt that there was no better way than to resist to the bitter end.

Others had been defrauded by cattle-men, who had rented their lands and refused to pay, or had seized them without any formalities. Each had some grievance of his own beside the general one of the tribe — that of being unconfined prisoners, kept to a comparatively small Reservation where they had been in the habit of roaming at their own will. They saw the iron walls of civilization clos-

ing around them, with the avowed object of crushing them out of existence. They had no voice by which to make their complaints heard, no way of attracting the attention of the Government except by making themselves a terror, often no escape from starvation except through rapine.

Like "their cousins the coyotes" they had been hunted, driven, shot down by military and settlers without inquiring as to their guilt, until the only life left to them was that of the wild beast.

It sometimes seemed to Howling Wolf that he was growing more and more like his namesake — a skulking, lean Ishmaelitish creature half cowardly, half reckless, with a wolfish nature like the coyote as Bret Harte describes him, stealing silently over the prairie in the twilight :

"A shade on the stubble, a ghost by the wall,
Now leaping, now limping, now risking a fall,
Loath ever to leave and yet fearful to stay,
A thoroughly vagabond outcast in gray."

The greater part of the band took refuge for the winter further south in the sheltered valleys of the Sierra Madre, others among the villages of the Pu-

eblos or building-Indians. As these were leaving Mexico the National Guard attacked the small party with which Howling Wolf was travelling, and he with a number of women and children whom he was obstinately defending were captured. He was mounted on his pony grown lean and wiry but no less rugged for its mountain scrambling, and he had resolutely kept his place between the squaws and the Mexicans, guarding their retreat, which was necessarily slow, as many of the women were mounted on stubborn little donkeys. At last two soldiers caught the pony by its bridle and a third dragged Howling Wolf from the saddle, disarming and pinioning him with the help of two comrades, but not before he had made fierce resistance. One of the Mexicans mounting the pony, the animal did not wait for Howling Wolf's yell of command to throw its rider, but sagaciously "bucked," and finding that his rider who had been a raquero was not to be dislodged by this means, went through with all his accomplishments in the way of rearing, rolling, kicking, biting, shying, plunging and stopping suddenly, until with a

final leap he sent the adventurous soldier with a back somersault through the air. Then he threw a vicious kick toward the nearest group which doubled up two more of the National Guard, and turned in a doubtful way toward his little master, who shouted fiercely the order which the pony knew meant, "Flee for your life," and which was instantly obeyed. In a moment more the pony was racing after the retreating Apaches, and Howling Wolf had the satisfaction of seeing Geronimo abandon the horse on which he was riding and leap to his back.

Some of the Indians lay dead upon the ground; these were instantly scalped by the Mexicans, who in so doing showed themselves a grade below their foes, for the Apache never scalps an enemy. The bloody locks, for which a large price had been offered by the Mexican Government, were hoisted on long poles, and the party took up its line of march for the city of Chihuahua, driving their captives before them.

The city gave the guard a public reception. As they marched down the tree-shaded alameda

in triumphal procession the bells of every church pealed out a pæan of frenzied joy, guns were fired, the men cheered and shouted, and the women waved their scarfs and threw flowers to the soldiers. Howling Wolf drew closer to the side of one of the squaws whom he had defended, a woman in a dirty and faded Mexican shawl itself a trophy taken by her husband long since from her captors. Apparently deserted by her husband and friends, she still bore herself with the grand mien of a conquered Zenobia. She was confident that Geronimo would come for her again, and bitterly revenge any indignity which might be put upon her by these "dogs of Mexicans."

The captives were huddled temporarily in a filthy dungeon, and the procession breaking up the more pious proceeded to the cathedral where a *Te Deum* was sung in honor of the event. Shortly after this a strange sight was seen. The captives were divided, *sold* would be the truer term among the rancheros, and Howling Wolf and Geronimo's wife became the property of the same man. Out of the city, away to the north, to a *hacienda* or farm,

they were marched on the following day. Here at least were warm adobe houses and the captives fared even better than the Apaches who escaped, but they were made to work, and were corrected by the overseer of the peons with a sharp stick of mescal. They were fed with *ateol*, a kind of porridge which was hardly sufficient to sustain them, and the wife of Geronimo fell sick with longing for the deliverance which did not come.

She pined so day by day, that at last the master of the *hacienda* turned her loose telling her to go where she would. It was in the early spring, the weather inclement, and she the day before had been in an apparently dying condition; but the sense of freedom put new life in her, and she trudged away full of hope and happiness. Before she left she bade Howling Wolf be of good courage, for he would certainly be rescued soon. The season was approaching at which the tribe would take to the mountains, and she would send for him.

With this hope at his heart Howling Wolf lived on and labored to avoid the mescal stick. His

work was about the corral in the care of the cattle and burros, and he slept in a shed in one corner of the cattle-pen. No one had spoken kindly to him during the entire winter, not even the priest who came occasionally and preached in the little mud chapel. He had been obliged to attend the service, but he had regarded it as white men's "medicine" for their own success, and he had hugged his precious fetich during the preaching, beseeching the Great Blue Eagle which it represented to come and carry him away in its claws.

He had found some indigo and freshened up the tattooed pony on his breast, fancying that the brighter he kept the image the sooner he would see the original, for all through his weary captivity he had kept up heart and courage by his faith that sooner or later the pony would come back to him or he to it.

And it was the pony who came back. One day the rancheros brought it in, panting, frightened, trembling in every limb, worn thin with hard usage, and shaggy from neglect — a miserable-looking little beast. Still there was fire in its eye

and plenty of go in the sinewy legs. Howling Wolf noticed that Geronimo had hardened the pony's hoofs with a preparation of mescal rendering them nearly as well provided for mountain travel as though shod with iron. The rancheros had found the pony in a wood a few miles distant tied to a tree by a bit of rope. Who had left it there they could not imagine, perhaps some traveller who would appear and claim it.

So they talked among themselves, but Howling Wolf knew that Geronimo had passed by; that he had not dared attack the *hacienda* and that his wife, knowing that the rancheros passed every day through this little wood, had left the pony there to aid him in escaping.

Howling Wolf did not go near the pony while the men were present, but when they were at dinner he stole into the corral and covered it with caresses. The poor creature recognized its little master and almost human tears trickled down its face. Howling Wolf fed it well and hurried out of the corral for fear that the affectionate animal would betray their acquaintance.

He was met by one of the rancheros who took him to Don Miguel, the owner of the *hacienda*. He led Howling Wolf to a window and pointed to a slender line of black resinous smoke ascending in a spiral curve in the direction of the mountains. "That is a smoke-signal of Apaches," said Don Miguel.

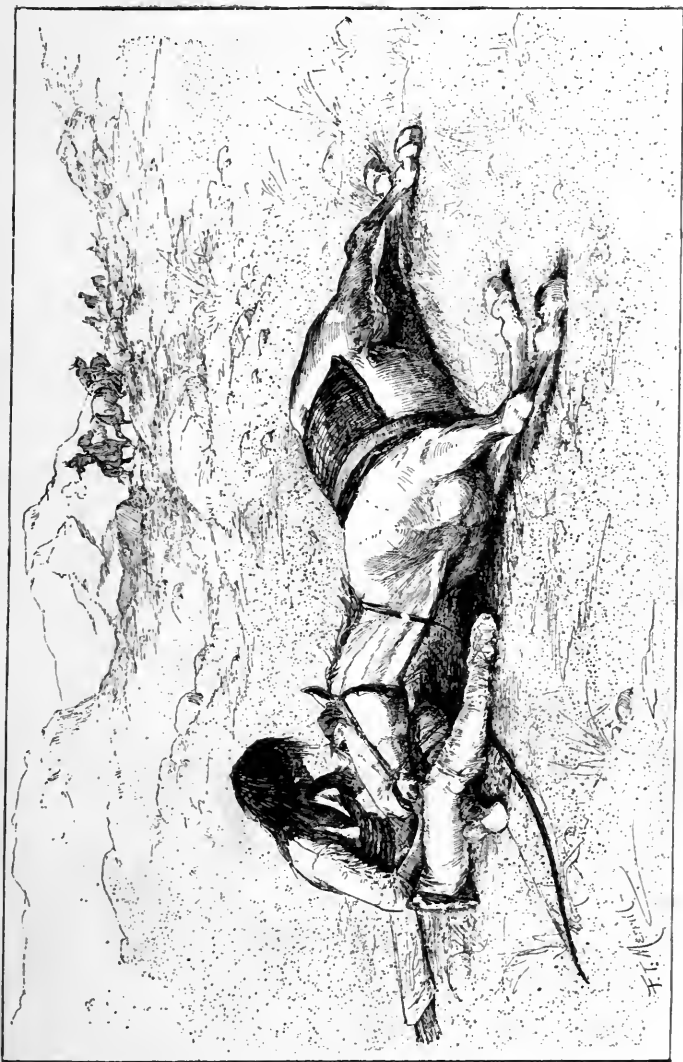
Howling Wolf did not reply, and Don Miguel went on to explain that a great reward had been offered by the Government to any one who would secure, or lead to the securing of Geronimo. "You," said the Don, "were with him, you know his haunts and his signals. To-morrow I shall lead a band of rancheros in pursuit of him. We will arrange an ambuscade, and if you will answer his signals in such a way as to lead him into our trap you shall be rich beyond your utmost power of conception." Don Miguel opened a small iron bound chest full of silver dollars. "This shall be yours," he said, "if you will call Geronimo into our hands."

Howling Wolf laughed aloud and snapped his fingers in derision. This opportunity of rejecting

all that could be offered filled him with a fierce joy. Nearly all of Geronimo's desperate followers had had such chances, and none of them had ever thought of being other than incorruptibly loyal.

Don Miguel, much incensed, ordered his hands and feet to be tied with stout cord, and he was laid in his cabin. Howling Wolf had already cut notches in the adobe wall by means of an old stirrup by which he expected to climb over and effect his escape that night. But, now that he was tied, all hope seemed to have been taken away, and another night the Indians would be far beyond his reach. He struggled with his bonds until the ropes cut into the flesh, but could not break them, and had given up in despair, when he heard a mournful questioning whinny. He had forgotten his pony. He uttered the low wolfish cry which the bright creature knew so well.

The shed was open to the corral and though it was now quite dark the animal found him immediately. For a time Howling Wolf had some difficulty in making it understand that he wished the knots picked from the cords, but at length the in-



HOWLING WOLF IS FAITHFUL TO HIS FAITHFUL PONY.



telligent animal comprehended and performed the task. Then it was perfectly easy to scale the wall, and opening the gate from the outside, he let out the pony, who was all impatience for the start.

This rescue was the last kind deed which his pony was to perform for him.

He caught up with Geronimo the following day and telling him of the search which had been organized they hastened on with a precipitancy which cost them dear. A scouting party of United States soldiers were encamped in the next valley and upon them they incautiously rushed.

The Apaches broke and wheeled as soon as the troops were discovered, and again Howling Wolf skimmed lightly back and forward aiding the frightened squaws and children.

On came the troops. They were cavalry who had dismounted on account of the uneven ground and were firing by the side of their Indian allies. They were led by Captain Hodge, who uttered a fierce shout of exultation as he recognized Howling Wolf and the pony. "Aim for the boy, Lieutenant," he cried, "and I will take the pony. If

I cannot secure it alive at least that little wretch shall not get off with it again."

He snatched a rifle from one of the soldiers, and screening himself behind a bowlder, took careful aim. There was a sharp report and the pony bounded high and fell. Howling Wolf was on his feet instantly and Geronimo drew rein and called, extending his hand to help him mount behind him.

But Howling Wolf was deaf to any sound but the gurgling moan in his dying pony's throat. He ran to the spot unmindful that the Indians had now deserted it and that the troops were swarming in, and threw himself upon the ground taking his pony's head in his lap. The filmy eyes recognized him; there was a quiver of the sensitive nostrils, a twitch of the ever-ready ear and his faithful friend was gone.

A heavy hand was laid upon his shoulder and a gruff voice exclaimed, "You little rascal! you are my prisoner at last."

The boy struggled fiercely. "You shot my pony!" he cried, endeavoring to draw his Ute knife. But a pair of strong arms pinioned him

from behind and Manuelito disarmed and held him securely, while the Lieutenant coming up examined the dead pony. "The pony was to be yours," he said at last to Captain Hodge, "and you have secured it. The boy by your own agreement is mine."

CHAPTER XII.

THE MEDICINE FOUND.

IT was long after the capture of Howling Wolf before Geronimo gave up the unequal fight. But at last, leaving the deserted Jesuit mission in which he had been hiding, he came into the United States camp and surrendered to General Miles. A great breath of relief was drawn by the settlers of both Arizona and Mexico. For years they had lived in terror of their lives. For three years one sixth of the entire United States army had followed this daring free-booter, with an immense expenditure of money, valor, and hardship, and with all the appliances of the telegraph and railroad on their side to give warning and to furnish transportation for comparatively unlimited supplies. With the army of Mexico as allies, and with all civilization to back them, our army in the

field with over four thousand men, had been successfully defied and flouted by from fifty to a hundred vagabonds !

It was a mad struggle. Yet if our forefathers were authorized in taking up arms against Great Britain this handful of men also had right upon their side in uttering their protest for the whole Indian race against tyranny. People talk of Indian atrocities but never think of the atrocities which have been committed upon the Indian ; how our government has never kept a single treaty in its long " century of dishonor." Our fair land has much to account for and it is well that the boys, the voters of the next generation, should know some of the wrongs of the Indians and face this great problem with a spirit of fairness which has not hitherto been shown.

Howling Wolf was greatly surprised by his meeting with Manuelito and Tomas. His heart softened as the scouts told him how the Lieutenant had exerted himself in their behalf ; saving them when circumstantial evidence seemed so much against them, by laying bare before their

judges the character of Grab-em-all-Joe, his seizure of their land and the murder of their father, the old Blanket Weaver.

The scouts had been devotedly attached to their Lieutenant ever since. They had led the soldiers surely and unfalteringly on the track of the Apaches, travelling like them seventy-five to a hundred miles in twenty-four hours, often running for entire days on foot beneath a broiling sun or climbing mountains ten thousand feet high, finding the trail where no one else could discover it, and more than once pointing out an ambuscade. The scouts, too, had saved the Lieutenant's life more than once, and had proved themselves faithful and efficient. They possessed all the traits which General Crook says render the Apache the tiger of the human species: "acuteness of sense, perfect physical condition, absolute knowledge of locality, and almost absolute ability to preserve themselves from danger." They were now in their element, and were perfectly happy, and they took Howling Wolf to themselves with great delight. As he was not an Apache he did not fall under

the head of prisoners-of-war, and the Lieutenant was allowed to incorporate him for the time among his scouts.

Howling Wolf himself did not care. All of his joy in life had gone out with the death of his pony ; they might take him where they pleased or do with him what they would—it did not matter to him. He looked the picture of listless indifference. Captain Hodge said that he was sullen and ugly. Manuelito was of the opinion that he was sick — “had an evil spirit in his stomach.” But the Lieutenant feared that his heart was broken.

The Senator and his daughter Helen were in New Mexico. The Lieutenant wrote them of his acquisition and they met him at once at a frontier post some distance from the railroad where the troops had been ordered. Helen had been intensely interested in what she had heard of the boy's history. Manuelito told her now all that he knew, and as she was about to return to the East she offered to take Howling Wolf with her and place him in some proper educational institution.

"I fear," said the Lieutenant, "that he will kill himself from sheer homesickness, and that under no circumstances can he become accustomed to civilization."

"Let me talk with him," said Helen; and walking to where he sat apart she placed her hand on Howling Wolf's head, saying, "I saw your grandmother in Colorado."

The boy drew away shyly and kept his gaze fixed on the distant prairie.

"She was looking for the Lost Medicine of the Utes," said Helen.

A slight spasm swept over the boy's face and he gave her a look both wondering and pleading.

Grandmother Two Tongues will not find it," Helen continued impressively and kindly. "But Howling Wolf will. The Lost Medicine of the Utes is hidden at a school for Indian boys and girls where I am told you are soon to be sent, and you will find it."

The boy sprang to his feet, every nerve quivering with excitement. "How you know all this?" he said, in broken English. "Who tell you?"

"I know more about you, Howling Wolf," Helen said kindly, "than I can tell you now. I know all about Manuelito and Tomas and your dear pony. A true friend of yours has told me, and how you have sought so long for the Lost Medicine of your tribe. I think it was Manitou who put it into my heart to come and tell you just where to find it."

"When? where? how?" asked the boy eagerly.

"You must learn to speak English first, a great deal better than you do now; you must learn to read, for you will find directions about this Medicine in books; and above all you must learn to work. You will never find the Medicine if you are lazy, or untruthful. You must be patient, too," she added. "It will not come right away, but never lose hope or courage, for you will find it!"

A moment more and Howling Wolf was alone, staring as blankly as before at the shimmering distance; but there was no longer any listlessness in face or attitude, and the day really marked the beginning of a new life. It was long before he understood what the magic Medicine was for which

he toiled, but through study, work and waiting, there ran a steady, powerful persistence which never lost sight of its aim.

Arrayed in some cast-off clothing of the Lieutenant's, he bade a cheerful good-by to the disappointed Manuelito and Tomas and took his place in the cars, guarding Miss Helen's baggage, a perfectly trustful, confident look in his dark eyes. He shook hands with the Lieutenant politely, but it was plain that he only admitted him into his friendship on tolerance, because he, too, was a favorite of the young lady's, and that he parted from him with sublime indifference.

"You have stolen his heart," said the Lieutenant, smiling; "well, it is an old trick of yours."

Helen left Howling Wolf at the Indian Industrial School at Carlisle, in Pennsylvania, where he mingled with several hundred other Indian youth. It was the prettiest home he had ever lived in — these old barracks surrounding a grassy plaza with band-stand in the centre and shady trees and cool verandas. He wore a cadet uniform now with brass buttons which were a continual delight

to him, and over which his fingers played continually. His long locks, purple-black like a crow's plumage, had been cut, and his pony's likeness was covered beneath a white shirt front ; but he learned very soon to be as proud of these symbols of civilization as he had been of his bead-embroidered deer-skin and eagle's feathers.

He sat quietly in the little white chapel listening to sweet hymns and the simple words of Jesus which did not strike him now, as the service in the Mexican chapel had once done, as a Medicine-Dance. He studied in the schoolroom, though the confinement was irksome to him, with earnest endeavor because the beautiful lady had told him that some way these books were to help him in finding his talisman.

But he found a new joy and interest in the trade to which he had been assigned. He was to learn tinsmithing. The bright metal fascinated him at once ; he would have liked to cut out ornaments with the great shears, moons and stars from the shining sheets, but it was quite as amusing to fashion the little pans and cups. It reminded him

of the work of some Navajo silversmiths which he had watched with interest, and he soon learned to use the soldering iron with great deftness. It was a proud moment for him when he made all by himself an army canteen similar to the one for which the Blanket Weaver had paid so dearly, and his first request was to be allowed to send a set of cake tins to Miss Helen and a couple of canteens of his own make to his friends, Manuelito and Tomas. He took great pride in his work, as do all the boys at this model institution. He saw young men in the next shop making wagons which were purchased by the government for army use. There were boys from the wildest tribes, Comanches, Kiowas, Sioux, Cheyennes and even Apaches, with a score of other tribes, running sewing machines in the tailoring establishment, making excellent harnesses and shoes, blacksmithing, painting, baking, building houses, printing, farming, acting as overseers, as musicians, drilling as soldiers, learning the duties of clerk, hospital steward, waiter, caring for stock, driving teams, making themselves competent and useful in many ways.

Summer came and Howling Wolf noted a new feature; the more apt of these who had been in the school for two years were "planted out," or allowed to work for themselves during vacation. Many found homes in farmers' families where they progressed even faster than at the school, and learned to love more and more a civilized life, and to appreciate the blessings of a Christian home. Howling Wolf had not spent the usual length of time at the school, but the proprietor of a large canning establishment had applied for hands, and the boy had made such progress in his trade that he was allowed to go. This glimpse of outer life had its usual effect. He experienced the first thrill of earning money, he learned to measure himself by white boys and to find that he could do as good work as the other operatives. He made several acquaintances who treated him kindly, and he learned that white men were not all his enemies. He saw something of business and the large way in which it was conducted in this establishment opened his mind to broader notions of the way white men amassed

fortunes. His nights were spent not in a boarding-house but in a farmer's home, and here too he was constantly imbibing new ideas. He went back to school in the autumn with twenty-five dollars laid aside and a new trunk of his own purchase — containing a mysterious something which none of his fellow students were allowed to see.

On the very day of his return he had an interview with Captain Pratt, the large-hearted, clear-headed superintendent of the school.

It was hard for him to explain exactly what he wanted. "At Fort Defiance," he said, "one girl — they call West Wind — I want to come to this school. You write letter, send this twenty-five dollars, this trunk ; maybe she come."

"This West Wind is your sister?" asked the Captain.

"Pretty near — all same," replied the boy.

"But if she comes," said the Captain, "you can then give her the trunk ; it would cost a great deal to send it to Fort Defiance, and it would trouble her to bring it back with her."

Howling Wolf turned an imploring look to Mrs.

Pratt. "Come see," he begged. He opened the trunk and showed the interested lady a girl's dress, which he had bought at some store of ready-made clothing. It was of neat gray wool goods, for Howling Wolf had selected a dress as nearly as possible like that which the beautiful lady wore who had spoken to him in New Mexico. There was also a hat and a pair of shoes and stockings.

"I understand," said Mrs. Pratt; "you wish West Wind to have these things; but will it not do to give them to her after she arrives?"

The boy flushed. "I don't want West Wind to look like Apache when she comes," he said; "old blanket, bead moccason, no stocking. I want her look all same white girl. Other scholars not laugh at West Wind."

"They shall not laugh at her," said Mrs. Pratt kindly. "I will write to friends in the West and we will see how we can manage it; she shall come neatly dressed and you may leave this trunk in my room and give it to her as soon as she arrives."

It so happened that the Lieutenant was coming East on important business to himself, and West

Wind, whose mother had died, was very willing to accept the opportunity of education offered her. She had already made good progress at the Agency school, and Howling Wolf need not have trembled for her appearance.

The joy that lit up the boy's manly face at the reunion was something good to see. He stepped up to the Lieutenant too, and gave him his hand asking for Manuelito and Tomas, who were quite happy in their army life, and thanked him for the interest which he had at last learned to appreciate.

"Tell Miss Helen," he said, "I find 'em, that Medicine; any Indian work hard, he have good luck every time."

Howling Wolf still studies at the Training School. He will be a superior workman, perhaps more, for he has developed a taste for original experiment rare in a boy of his opportunities. It all came from a desire to make a ring for West Wind from a ten-cent piece. He labored over it in the shop at odd moments and became interested in the difference between silver and tin, and from this fell to experimenting with lead, brass,

iron, every metal on which he could lay his hand. One of the teachers showed him a small cabinet of minerals, and gave him some simple chemical tests for detecting different metals. From that time he developed a habit of observing the stones on the roadside, searching for traces of ore.

At last, one day — and this showed how his love for scientific inquiry was overcoming his superstition — he broke his eagle fetich in pieces and analyzed it. With the knowledge that this was virgin silver, came the realization that he had discovered a valuable silver mine. But he knew, too, that he could never secure any benefit from it to himself. Law was all on the side of the white man; there was no chance for the Indian.

As he sat moodily with the silver in his hand, a messenger came to tell him that a visitor wished to see him. It was Miss Helen, *Miss* no longer, but wife of the Lieutenant, who had stopped at the school with her husband on her way West. "What have you brought me?" she asked, noticing his closed fingers. "Is it a wedding present?"

"Yes," Howling Wolf replied eagerly, pouring

the shining grains into her hand, and hurriedly explaining the circumstances of his finding it, and the situation of the mine. "The Lieutenant can secure it for you and I want you to have it," he added with great earnestness.

"We will secure it for *you*, dear fellow," Helen replied.

But Howling Wolf shook his head. "Government must make me an American first," he said.

"We will see, we will see," said the Lieutenant cheerfully; "and meantime study and learn all you can here and when you are through, if you like, you shall go to some Technological Institute and learn about metallurgy and geology, and we will have you a prospector or assayer one of these days. My wife shall own the mine in trust for you, and you must fit yourself for it. The Indian shall yet find his Lost Medicine, even in the West."







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